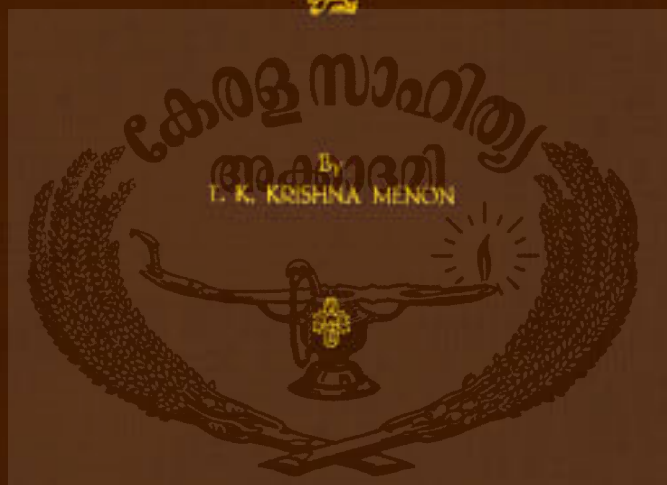


THE DAYS THAT WERE

(MEMOIRS)



1949

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL PRESS, ERNAKULAM

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628	4	worth	work
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686	10	dated	acted
691	26	rulior	ruler
693	31	rooms	room
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702	38	enervating	energizing
726	31	bood	good
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"	33	gspecial	special
779	21	didam	disdain



INTRODUCTION

I esteem it a great privilege to have had the opportunity of reading these interesting Memoirs of a life which has been as rich in experience as it has been useful in service to the Ruler and people of the State. Mr. Krishna Menon's pictures of domestic life in an upper class Nayar household are of special value because they are so rare; while his description of the many and varied activities which have occupied his working years forms in fact a full narrative of the more important public events which have occurred in Cochin during his life-time. It is well that he should have devoted part of his retirement to the compilation of these volumes; for the account which he gives of his public and private avocations cannot but win the admiration of all who read it. That some of his readers will be inspired to emulate the example of public service revealed in its pages is, I feel sure, the hope of the author and the main object with which he has undertaken the heavy labour of publication. I trust he will not be disappointed.

May 1945.

Sd. G. T. Bong.

Author's Prefatory Note.

The genesis of this book I have given in the closing chapter of the work. After it was finished, it was neatly typed by Mr. T. R. Krishna Iyer of the Champion Institute of Commerce, Ernakulam. It was carefully revised by my friend, Mr. L. V. Ramaswami Iyer, M. A., B. L., Lecturer in the Maharaja's College. Between us there is a bond of cordial understanding. He has catholic but fine judgment; and his calm mood has precision and authority behind it. His attainments in English are well-known; but that he is

a master of many languages is, perhaps, known only to scholars who are intimate with him; and his knowledge in phonetics and comparative philology is sought after by them in India and from the west. To me the admirable part of it all is that his scholarship is seasoned with a most engaging modesty. In congenial climes, he would have been on the top; but, here, circumstances did not play into his hand, and he is forced to fulfil an inexorable fate. It is a matter for wonder that, in spite of seasons of adverse mists, there is no lack of mellow fruitfulness, and he maintains a composed and contented mind. His remarks about the book I give below.

"Mr. Krishna Menon's recollections constitute an epitome of the inside history of Cochin Society and administration for over half a century. Many of the older generation would recognize familiar figures in Mr. Krishna Menon's crowded gallery of portraits. Perhaps the most touching of all his pen-pictures is that of his elder brother, Mr. Govinda Menon, to whom he owed his all.

"Mr. Menon's recollections form a reflex of his many-sided personality. He has to-day become an institution in the State. His achievements as a lawyer, a publicist, a literature and a philanthropist have won for him an enviable reputation. It might have been easy for Mr. Menon to have secured a comfortable Government job early in life; but his love of public service, his deep civic sense stood in the way. Precisely because he remained outside the portals of Government service, his knowledge and experience were continually indented upon. Mr. Menon placed these at the disposal of the Government unstintedly and ungrudgingly for the past three or four decades. There are not many who can show such an unbroken record of public service rendered without fear or favour all these long years.

"There is not one dull page in these recollections. Frankness is the outstanding characteristic of Mr. Menon's outlook. Whether it is his experience as a student, or his contacts with administrators, or his relations with friends, he deals with them all with refreshing candour — candour which never offends courtesy. Embers of old animosities might be stirred in one or two contexts; but here Mr. Menon would perhaps plead *arsa indignatio* as his justification.

"Mr. Krishna Menon's work will revive fond memories among readers of the older generation, while to younger people they supply much valuable advice based on the experience of a life-time."

June 1945

(Sd.) L. V. Ramaswami.

Neither when the events transpired nor when I wrote of them had I any 'animus' in my mind. Of that I am certain. I did not attempt to tone down the two parts referred to by Mr. Ramaswami, because of the remarks of another competent authority.

Principal Mr. P. Sankaran Nambiyar, getting a hint about the memoir from his colleague, took it from me to peruse it. On returning part three (Chapters 8 and 9), he flattered me with a note which said, "Sat up till 2 last night! Highly illuminating. Read the whole of this, line by line, with absorbing interest." Again of part five (Chapters 13 to 18), he thus wrote: "I read through the whole of this volume with such absorbing interest that it was 3 A. M. when I went to bed last night! I began in the evening and finished it at a single sitting."

"It is undoubtedly a soul-revealing document of the author's 'last will and testament' to posterity. I do not wish to tamper with its contents which, I fear, would cease to be a mirror of the author's inner self if

THE DAYS THAT WERE.

I. MY EARLY DAYS.

1. My Family.

"The tender grace of a day that is gone, comes back to me."

COCHIN, though a small State, a small speck in the vast map of India, yet stands foremost among the Indian States in antiquity, culture and administrative efficiency.

The history of Cochin as a separate political entity begins with the partition of Kerala by the last of the Perumals and his voluntary abdication from the throne. But, long before that, it had begun to make history. According to Pliny, Cranganur in the Cochin State was the first emporium in India. It is the Muziris of the Greeks, the Muchiri of the Tamils and Kodungallor and Cranganore of modern days. It was to this port that the Phoenicians, the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans first came for trade in India. The Jews, the Muhamnadaas and the Christians alike claim it as their first settlement in India. Near it was Matilakam, the seat of a famous university. Buddhism had a great innings in Cochin; and Saṅkaracharya, the great Advaitin, - was a Cochinite. Cochin played a prominent part in the spread of Indian culture and in the expansion of the Indian trade. In the sphere of administration also, Cochin has a record of which any country may well be proud.

In physical features too, the State presents landscapes of surpassing beauty. The belt that borders on

the sea, with its 'landlocked lagoons and feathery palms' is rich with the works of man. "As we leave the seaboard, an undulating country, diversified with grassy flats, naked hills and wooded terraces, intersected by numerous rivers and rapids dashing down from cliff to valley, and profusely dotted with homesteads, orchards and cultivated fields, rolls up to the foot of the western ghats, where the landscape, now become nobler and more intensified in grandeur, merges itself in wide forests of continuous shade, having a woody theatre of statliest view amidst a variegated maze of mound and glen."

Ernakulam is the present capital of Cochin State, while Trichur was the principal capital of Malabar. The Perumalshah had their capital at Thiruvanchikulam, and their summer residence at Karupatanna. There is a good old trunk-road between Karupatanna and Shoranur, lined with avenue trees on either side of it. In spite of the Cochin-Shoranur railway, that road is still greatly resorted to by pedestrians and motorists, and used for common vehicular traffic as well. Bordering this road and about four miles to the north of Karupatanna is the sequestered hamlet called Poomangalam of which Vellanganellur is a *desam*. This locality in ancient days formed part of the territory of Aiyur Svarupam. It is a self-contained typical neat, little agricultural village, with its wavy rice-fields, and its tank, and temple, and the residence of the Vazhapilli Namputiri, the premier landlord of the place. My ancestral home was in Vellanganellur.

An officer of the Nagar Brigade married Kochulla Amma, a member of the above Vellanganellur family. In 983 M. E., he brought his wife and children to Ernakulam. He must have been a man of some consequence, for he had his abode within the fort near the palace and in the vicinity of the famous Siva temple. Though that house was small, the compound

in which it stood measured more than four acres. The house was subsequently rebuilt and, when I began to know it, it was a very large quadrangular building, with two inner court-yards, four spacious halls, and any number of bed rooms, a granary, a kitchen and two store-rooms. Even the loft was so roomy, lighted and ventilated, that people could conveniently live there. The Ernakulam house has all along been known as Thottakkat. From Poomangalam (*poō*, *puvva* - flower, *maṅgalam* - bliss, felicity) to Thottakkat (*thottam* - garden, *katu* - forest) is not a bad transition. Any way, it is a family well-known in all Kerala, and its fame is established by its connection with the names of Dewans Sankara Warriar, Sankunni Menon and Govinda Menon.

Sankara Warriar married Srinathi Kunjupilla Amma of the Thottakkat house. By Kunjupilla Amma, Sankara Warriar had three sons, the last of whom predeceased the other two. The two others were Dewans Sankunni Menon and Govinda Menon. The lives of these three Dewans have been written and published by Mr. C. Achutha Menon, the author of the *State Manual* of Cochin, and who was the Secretary to the Government of this State for a long time. So I do not propose to deal with the lives of these three great men who shed lustre on my family, except to the extent of paying my obeisance to the great memory of these three outstanding persons in the annals of Cochin.

In 1012, when his third son died, Sankara Warriar took his wife and his other two children to his residence which lay to the immediate north of the Thottakkat house. They never lived in any of the family houses after that. In 1019 M. E., when the Thottakkat house was being reconstructed, one (*thavazhi*) branch, for want of space, moved to a house and compound immediately to the east of the main house, the other one remained in an out-house which



Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon.



was not dismantled but was left undisturbed for their occupation.

During the life-time of Sankunni Menon, when the eastern branch made certain attempts to effect a partition in the family, Sankunni Menon said that it might be done. But he also added that his landed properties too should be divided along with the ancestral assets, to be owned and possessed by the two houses after the death of the two brothers. He was too big to be small, too good to be mean. When the members of the Eastern house found that Sankunni Menon was really serious in the suggestion he made, they dropped the idea. But they took it up and worked it to a successful issue after his passing away, with the help of Elayathu Peishcar and Huzoor Registrar Mr. T. C. Kochunni Menon. I have seen letters of these two persons to my brother Kochunni Menon, who was then a Registrar, and to my brother-in-law, Mr. Karakkat Narayana Menon, who was then a Tasildar-Magistrate, requesting these to co-operate with them in bringing about a complete separation of the two houses. My mother told my brothers not to stand in the way of the wishes of Dewan Govinda Menon as all the three Dewans were on the best of terms with our father. To smoothen the course, Mr. Neelacanta Menon, the Karnavan of our branch and the eldest male member of both the houses, was promised by the Dewan a bonus of a thousand rupees, and a monthly allowance of Rs. 10 and daily meals or delivery of provisions. It was under such circumstances that the *amsa-patram*, or deed of partition, No. 19, of 1069 of the Kanayannur Registry Office, came into existence. To give unimpeachable validity to the deed, certain incorrect statements were incorporated into it, a dubious procedure that cannot but be deplored. The allegations in it that there was a prior partition, but a second one was occasioned by the appeal of the members of the western family to Dewan

Govinda Menon, who is put down as the Karanavan of the Eastern house, to relieve them of their debts and to help them with funds to meet their yearly deficits, stand against facts. After the death of Dewan Govinda Menon, my brother, Govindankutty Menon, prepared a memorandum with an idea of taking steps to set aside this deed and secure justice to the Western family. In this memorandum and in the marginal notes to a copy of the *amsapatram*, these points are refuted. Into that unpleasant controversy it is profitless to enter here. Suffice it to note that my brother was prevailed upon by my mother and our relatives and friends not to launch on an irritating and hazardous litigation, especially when its successful porting was problematical. In a short sketch of the history of my family which I wrote on the 1st of Chingom 1062 (15th August, 1886) as a preface to my diary which I started on that day, I have said "I am right glad that I belong to the poor Western branch; for, if we have riches, we may become proud, may not care to work for our livelihood." I still stand by those words; and I am glad to add to them that it was the members of the Western branch that have fervently tried to enhance the glory of the family and of the great men who have gone before them.

2. My Parents.

I was born at Cochin on the 26th of Vrischigam 1045, corresponding to the 9th of December 1869. My father, Nanthikkaray Chathu Panikkar, was then the Tasildar-Magistrate of the Cochin Taluk, and he with his wife and children was living in the Sircar building allotted to him. My father was not in the station at the time of my birth, as he had gone on deputation to Tripoonithura to superintend the annual *ulavam* festival in the temple there.

My friend the late Kerala Varma (Ammaman)

Thampuran, B. A., B. L., who was Professor of Oriental Studies in the Maharaja's College at Ernakulam, published, in 1934, a short life of my father in the magazine of that college. I take leave to make a few extracts from it here below. "He was born in the Nantikkara family, a respected but poor Taravad in Irinjalakuda in the Mukundapuram Taluk of Cochin. He became a fair scholar in Sanskrit and Malayalam, the two languages in which all education was imparted in those days and which represented culture then. He was a poet of no mean order He was given specialised tuition in the Hindu Science of architecture He evinced extraordinary genius and enthusiastic aptitude for acting . . . where he acquired a rank and renown which still rings in clarion notes in the Kathakali world.

"First he was entertained in the Kathakali troupe of the Maharaja. The Maharaja soon found out that this job was too low for a man of Panikker's ability, and so gave him a post in the Devaswom Department on 15 Rs. a month. He was soon promoted as a Tasildar-Magistrate of Cochin. During the time he was there, public complaints and grievances were almost unknown, so popular, able and successful was he as an officer. . . . His relations with his subordinates were amiable and sympathetic, and they in turn loved and honoured him.

"As a Tasildar-Magistrate, he had to do not only the revenue and magisterial work, but, whenever an occasion arose for an able, honest, loyal man's service, Panikker was always deputed for it. Thus he was a chief officer in charge of the conduct of the various ceremonies in the Palace. Because of his known skill in engineering, he was given charge of the construction of the Puthen Kovilakam in Trippoonithura, and, by command of the Maharaja, of the Wariyam at Trichur of Diwan Sankara Warier. When these works were being executed, he was transferred

first to Kanayannoor, and then to Trichur.

"He was an intimate friend of Diwans Sankara Warrior and Sankunni Menon in whose houses he was ever a very welcome guest. Panikker was ever of a friend-making temperament, being by nature a real literary man, a true lover and patron of fine arts and a genial poet—ever ready at tending the sick, feeding the hungry and relieving the distressed. . . . With his limited income he found it hard to make both ends meet; and he was so scrupulously honest and self-respecting that he never tried to increase it in any other way. His superiors knew his difficulties; and, to meet certain pressing and extraordinary demands, he was advised by them to start a *kuri*. The Palace took two tickets, the Diwan's brother Mr. Govinda Menon, and the Sarvadhikari each took one. His popularity was demonstrated when respectable representatives of several communities volunteered to help him to successfully run the *Kuri* to its close.

"For his meritorious and glorious services, he was presented by the Maharaja with a bell-metal hand-lamp, (*chhangalavatta*), *Veerasinghalas*, on three occasions, and a sword—the last one a unique, unprecedented and solitary instance of a Thasildar-Magistrate having been thus honoured. I believe this is the only instance in which an officer of the State, other than the Diwan, was given a sword by the Ruler." The Diwan's sword has to be returned when he relinquishes office. But my father's sword had not so to be given up. "He was also allowed to stay in the Cochin Palace before the construction of an official residence there."

"His hobby was excursions in Sanskrit and Malayalam literatures and exercises and tuitions in Kalari sports. It was a real sight to those who have seen it, to see him exercising himself in the various feats during the Dussera holidays. He also took

daily exercises according to Kalari Code. As such, he was ever healthy, free from any ill or complaints, keeping an athletic figure up to his last. He could thus appear on the Kathakali stage even in his very advanced age, and play his part as well as any young player. He never dropped a single tooth, or had any impaired one, till up to his death. Even while stretched on his death-bed, he had the vim, vigour and vivacity to engage himself in completing an incomplete part of a verse, a sort of literary competition; known as *samanyaparanam*.

"Not born in the halo of greatness, not born in the lap of luxury, pomp or power, he yet won greatness in its true sense and fame in its noble colours, and left his mortal coil, honoured and wept. He became great in his goodness, achieved honours in his work, and lived a life of useful and loyal service."

His wife was Srimathi Kuttipparu Amma. Kuttipparu Amma was a real *sahadharmancharini* of Chathu Panikker. She was an educated lady and a model housewife, and sincerely shared the joys and triumphs as well as the sorrows and trials of her husband. She was so charming and well-behaved that she was so to say adopted by Kunji Kava Amma, her mother's elder sister, and her husband Mr. Palliyil Kariakkar, an ancestor of Mr. P. Gopala Menon, as their daughter. These had only one son as their issue. He, Mr. Narayana Menon, was an efficient officer, and rose high in the Sircar service. But for his insistence in severing from it, he would have retired at least as the Valia Samprathy of the Huzur Office. The late Mr. Subramaniam Pillai, who, for a long time adorned the Appeal Court as its Chief Judge and who subsequently became the Dewan of Cochin, went out of his way to ask Narayana Menon not to resign his place. To this unusual request from the Diwan, he replied that he saw dark days ahead, and that the greatest good that the Diwan



Sry. T. Kuttippara Anna.

could do to him was to permit him to retire. He scored his point. He was a stern and taciturn sort of man, though a scholar and a painter. But even he worshipped my mother whose lightest wish was a law unto him. After the death of her husband, she spent much time in the management of the household, and in her prayers and in the reading of religious works. She was latterly so much engrossed in these acts of devotion that even her children could see her and conveniently converse with her only between 2 and 4 in the afternoons. She owned no spare hours during the life-time of her husband. As a rule, she got up very early, and, after her bath and prayers, she devoted her morning time to the care and comforts of her husband and children. A good part of the noon and afternoon would be taken up by visitors and by those who came for help and advice. I have never known of a poor person departing empty handed from her. Her wants were few and simple, and even her faults leaned to virtues' side. I have never seen her in a temper. Though cool and calm, she was firm in her resolve. She brought me up in a religious atmosphere, and taught me to have implicit faith in God, and

"To live for those who love me,
For those who know me true,
For the heaven that bends above me,
For the good that I can do;
For the wrongs that need resistance,
For the cause that lacks assistance,
For the future in the distance,
For the good that I can do."

In the preparatory note to my diary to which I have already alluded, I have noted down a free rendering of the first serious words of advice which my mother gave me. I shall transcribe them here, as they will give one an idea of her noble character.

"Have implicit faith in God.
 Never speak ill of another.
 And help the needy as much as you can."

I can honestly say that I have always tried to act up to her advice. Her children simply adored her; words would but ill describe the love, reverence and gratitude they had for her. My brother Mr. Govinda Menon, though an independent man with strong convictions, would never contradict her or go against her words. He and I always prostrated before her whenever we went away from her for stay elsewhere. As a boy my love for her was a passion. I have lain awake for hours because of my morbid fear of her death. When she was stricken with a virulent type of small-pox, my eldest sister nursed her, Govinda Menon stayed with her to attend to her wants, and he and I saw her twice or thrice every day. At one time, we feared that her life was at stake. The poor and the cows were fed sumptuously. There was a clear response to our prayers and pious offerings. And, when after her bath, she went to worship the Kavil Bhagavathi, the grateful escort that gathered round her would have surley raised the envy of an eastern potentate.

Her love for her children was a subject of constant and complimentary talk among those who knew her and her children. Perhaps I cannot presume to call her an angel; but she was

"a dear being, all dipt
 In angel instincts, breathing Paradise.

Happy he
 With such a mother. Faith in womankind
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
 Comes easy to him, and though he may trip
 and fall,
 He shall not blind his soul with clay."



Mr. T. Govinda Menon.

3. My Thayvazhi.

My parents had three sons and three daughters. Of these, I alone remain to tell this tale. To facilitate reference, it will be perhaps useful to give a geneological tree of those in my mother's line. My mother's mother was Srimathi Kunhippenna Amma. My mother had only one sister called Kunhippilla Amma to whom my grandmother was particularly attached. Kunhippilla Amma had a daughter named Parvathi Amma, and two sons, Narayana Menon and Kochupilla Menon. Narayana Menon was called Kuttan. He was a blind but gifted boy, and we liked each other very much. In music and *bhajana* we have spent several hours together. Latterly, his mind became deranged and his premature death pained none more than me.

My brothers and sisters had the advantage of our father's personal supervision in their early studies in Sanskrit and Malayalam. My sisters considerably improved their knowledge of these languages in subsequent years. They had their advanced studies under Vennimala Rama Varier, Thoravur Madhava Kurup, Malkothu Krishna Menon and others. Lessons in music were given them by Appu Bhagavather, the father of my friend Mr. T. A. Dorasamy Iyer. Even after they entered their married life, my sisters never left off their studious habits. All the three were well versed in Sanskrit, the youngest more than the other two. But it is Srimathi Ikkavu Amma who has left her mark in the history of Malayalam literature by her drama, *Sabhadrarjavanam*. My sisters, like our mother, were very religious and well known for their charitable disposition.

Mr. Kochunni Menon was one of Mr. Sealy's earliest and favourite students. After matriculating,



Sri. Kerala Varma Valia Koil Thampuran.



MY EARLY DAYS

We were, at the time of my father's death, living in the place, now known as Kumaralayam, but which was then called Thekkay Madham, which my father had built for his wife and children. It is a lovely place, with a road in front and the lagoon at the back. Though in the town, yet you feel as if you are far from the maddening sounds. Chattampi Swami used to say that, when he was here, he used to get the air and repose of a hermitage. The same remark was made by several others, particularly by Dr. Sunithi Chatterji, Dr. Lekshmanaswami Mudaliar, Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy and Swami Sidheswarananda. I do not know when exactly we shifted from here to the tharavad house. Kumaralayam at Ernakulam and Lily Lodge at Trichur have so worked into the mosaic of my life that I cannot refer to them except with lively and holy emotion.

After the death of my father, Mr. Kochulla Menon, who was then managing the affairs of the family, advised my mother to go over to the family residence as, by doing so, she could live with her children more comfortably than in the *madhom* with the limited resources at her command. Dewan Sankunni Menon also sent word to the same effect. This I heard from my mother after I grew up.

Kochulla Menon was the only living issue of Kunji Anna, a sister of my mother's mother. His uncle Mr. Neelacandha Menon, was alive till he lived practically with his wife and children. Menon was a very active person in the affairs of the family.

THE DAYS THAT WERE

Once it seems, he amazed an educated, critical audience by acting the part of Hanuman in the *Kalyana-Saugandhikam Attakatha*. "Who is he that comes? Is there none to rival him?" That was the *padam* which he had to act; and the conditions were that he was to sit all the while, and could use only the eyes and the facial muscles. He did his part so well that His Highness the Maharaja gave him rich presents and had his picture painted in that posture. I was not able to get at this painting even, for those in the palace did not know where it was preserved. He was bald; he had a round, smiling, generous face—these I vaguely remember. Every morning, when he took his meals, I used to get a ball of rice mixed with curds, and, on nights, he used to croon me to sleep with all sorts of funny songs which he improvised. But the one incident that has indelibly impressed on my memory is my being taken round his covered body by old Ayyappan Nair, the storekeeper of Dewan Sankunni Menon, before it was taken to the place of cremation. After that, I was taken to the gate-house where I found my two sisters crying. I could not say where my brothers and eldest sister were. I did not cry. I do not know why; probably because I found my mother directing the procedure with a courage which I was able to appreciate only in after years. O dear brave mother! What all thoughts must have flitted across your memory! How heroically you suppressed your acute agony to do the last honours to your beloved partner!

Years after, in 1946, I had the pleasure of seeing my father for a few seconds. I was observing on that day the fast for the performance of his *Sradham* the next day. At about 2 P. M., I was lying on my easy chair. I was wide awake, and reading *Bhagaratham*. Just then, about four yards away, near a rose-plant, his apparition, in a light rose-colour, was clearly seen by me. What a happiness I felt, I alone can realise.

freemasonary, a brotherhood, in old blood; and he was such a *thorough* gentleman.

"We seemed to understand each other from the first, and we never varied in our friendship to the end.

"When my wife and myself met your charming wife, I did not realize that you too were related to Govinda Menon. Now to hear her husband is actually his own brother is extremely charming to me.

"My only regret is that we have been so long in coming together."

My brother was the heart and soul of the Cochin Reform Association; he worked hard to bring into being the Victoria Jubilee Girls' School and the Native High School at Trichur; he was instrumental in starting the *Kerala Naudini* newspaper; and the Trichur Public Library and Reading Room is very much indebted to him for its steady growth.

Among the numerous letters of condolence that I received when he passed away, the one that I got from the late Puthussheeth Gopala Menon, is worthy to be recorded here. For, he was one who was very careful of the words he used, and was revered by those who knew him as a great teacher and practical statesman.

"It is in my sick bed that I heard of the serious illness of my late friend, your brother. I was very much concerned to hear of it. When, after a few days, Dr. Gunther told me of the dangerous turn his disease had taken, I was simply overwhelmed. Without flattery, Govindankutti Menon was one of the very few truly patriotic citizens we have ever had, and one who had the rare quality of the courage of his convictions. No country can afford to lose such a person, and Cochin least of all. But such is the curse of Cochin that the good and meritorious cannot thrive in it or exist in it long enough. But why should I poke into old sores; they only make us

feel the pain the keener."

Similarly, the one from the members of the Literary Union also deserves a place here.

"I think it is a solace to you to know that so many of your young friends participate in your grief for the loss of one who had been a power of strength to them and a patriotic and public spirited citizen of their country".

I lost my father in my fifth year. From that time till my brother's death, he was to me not only my friend and guide, but one more than all that. There were no secrets between us, and his purse was always at my disposal. He was anxious that I should not be under monetary obligations to others. Once when my eldest brother got me some articles of dress and an umbrella, he had their price sent to him. So, when my brother-in-law, Mr. Narayana Menon, offered me a money prize on my passing the fifth comparative examination with distinction, I excused myself by saying that, before accepting it, I wished to ask my brother; and brother told me not to take any money but to request Mr. Menon to kindly get me some books, which he did. After my F. A., as I was about to go to take leave of uncle Dewan Govinda Menon, my brother happened to be with us at Ernakulam. He said to me, in Malayalam, in the hearing of our mother, to this effect: "Aniya, he might say that he would send you money and all that. You can tell him that brother will look to all that." Mother felt mortified at his words, and, turning to me, she advised me never to say any such thing, but to gratefully accept what would be offered by the Dewan. The Dewan Govinda Menon met all the College expenses, such as fees, price of certain books; he even insisted on my purchasing a gown on my graduation.

My brother brought me up with a truly parental care. His affection towards me was so sincere that,

when he knew his end was near, he came to me that my wife and myself might have the privilege of nursing him. That act of his we shall never forget; and before I leave him here, to his glorious memory let me indulge the tribute of a grateful tear.

My sisters too were very fond of me. My upbringing was in the hands of my eldest sister. For the matter of that, she was responsible for the care and nursing of her sister's children also, particularly of Ikkavu Amma's children and their grandchildren, so much so that my elder brother used to remark in a taunting way that she was the elder-sister's maid-servant. After her son's death, she began to regard me as her son, and to train me and so teach me Sanskrit until I went to school. Till her death, I reciprocated her sentiments, and regarded her more as a mother than as a sister. The youngest sister, though undemonstrative, was devoted to me, and her affection for me was profound and lasted till her death. Just before she went to Benares, I went to see her at Trichur. She was at her prayers; but, when I was announced, she came out and insisted on her touching me, though that act meant another bath on that particularly cold morning. With tearful eyes she placed both her hands on my head, as I rose up after a prostration, and blessed me. During my school and college days, my elder-sister and myself moved like friends. She felt elated on my creditable career as a student, while I took a pride in her poetical accomplishments. She gave me the honour of editing her drama; and so pleased was she over my work that she taught me a *Kamara-Kaccham*. Neither she nor I knew then that I was born on a Shasti day and so this *mantram* was appropriate for my study and daily repetition. I came to realise its full significance only after I entered my professional career, and became acquainted with Swami Sivananda.

When her drama was published, there was

a chorus of praise from great scholars and also from the press. There were not, however, wanting persons who thought it was the work of Chambathil Chathukutti Mannadiar. I thought it was a great compliment to her that her work should be considered worthy of being the product of such a great poet as Mannadiar. We never took any notice of this malicious scandal. Venmani Mahan Namputiripad and Kunhi Kudtan Thampuran one day visited her and had a long talk with her. On leaving, the former apologised to her for his *śloka*m about the authorship of her drama. She only said "Let Truth prevail." I shall here enter a free rendering into English of certain relevant parts of a letter of hers to me, (21-3-1967).

"Even to those who intentionally malign, I bear no grudge When *Sabhdharjanam* was staged at Trichur, out of malice, certain persons among the audience too acted certain parts, it seems. Let it be as it is; I feel no weakness of heart The copies are all sold out. The very person who insisted on getting a limited number of copies alone printed now says that 2,000 copies should be struck. When will you come? The alterations you suggested, and the next work to be taken up we shall discuss and settle. Trust you will come soon after the closing of the College. I would like to get a copy of *Chanda-kauśikreṣyam* and *Svahasudhakaram*."

* * * * *

Before I close this subject, I think I am expected to say a few words about the children of my sisters. Srimathi Parukutty Amma, the daughter of the eldest sister, married Mr. C. Govindan Elayadam, who was for a long time, the senior Malayalam Pandit of the Maharaja's College at Ernakulam. He was a poet,

and translated *Tempest* and, at my instance, *Chandrasekhar* into Malayalam. He was honoured no less or, I should say, more for his character, than for his scholarship and his poetical skill. He led the life of a saintly house-holder and his students adored him as an ideal teacher. All his children were educated by him; four of them took their B. A., degree. Two of these, Ramankutti Menon and Govindankutti Menon, are no more. Like their parents, the brother, and most of the sisters they left behind owned poetical accomplishments of no mean order. Ramankutti Menon was one of my favourites; if he had lived long, he would have left his mark in the literary history of the country. He was a very well-behaved young man with no worldly wiles about him, and his loss was keenly felt and mourned by his relatives and friends. He has written, on my suggestion, a commentary on *Gita-Govindam* which would do credit to any erudite Pandit. His brother Mr. Madhava Menon is the Malayalam Translator to the Cochin Government. My youngest sister had only one issue Mr. Narayana Menon. After graduating in Madras, he took his studies in Forestry at Oxford. He was the Conservator of Forests in the Cochin State. His father was Mr. K. Venkat Rao, who was a District Munsiff in the judicial service of the Cochin State. As he was a practising lawyer before he became an officer, he had the confidence of the bar and commanded its respect. He was quick in the grasp of facts, learned enough to unravel the tangle of the legal problems that he had to consider, and he administered justice to the satisfaction of the litigant public. But, somehow, he incurred the displeasure of the powers that were, and had to retire from service under a cloud of suspicion. He was an independent man, and this adverse stroke did not break his spirit; and he lived and died a happy man in the midst of his newspapers and books, and in the company of his best and life-long friend

Mr. Pallyil Gopala Menon.

Mr. Karakkat Narayana Menon was the husband of my elder sister. Soon after he passed his B. A., he joined the Cochin Sircar service as a schoolmaster, and gradually rose, by dint of merit, to the proud position of the Dewan Peishcar and District Magistrate of the State. He was regarded as a very efficient officer, though at times a bit eccentric. He gained the full confidence of the Ruler whose demise took place in the Chingam of 1071 M. E., but his successor did not like him so much as that. At one time, a Commissioner was appointed to enquire into certain allegations made against him in an anonymous petition. Though the report did not fully exculpate him from all guilt, Diwan Rajagopala Chari backed him up and so he was able to rejoin his duty and, in time, to draw his pension. Raja Sir Vasudeva Raja of Kolleengode married his first daughter, and his brother Madhava Raja Avergal the second one. Sy. Janaky Amma is the wife of Mr. Narayana Pillai, a rich contractor, and Sy. Madhavi Amma that of Mr. Mannath Padmanabha Pillai, the well-known Secretary of the Nayar Service Society, while Sy. Gowri Amma is the Kottilamma of Katathanat Sankara Varma Raja. These too have inherited the poetical talents of their mother, while their brother, Dr. Krishna Menon, got the gifts of their father. Krishna Menon was a very good doctor, had English qualifications, and was enlisted for active service as an Officer of the I. M. S. during the time of the great European War that started in 1914. But for the absence of a little tact and his high ideas of independence, he could have, if only he had cared for it, easily reached an eminent place in the medical service in Cochin or British India, especially as he had his father-in-law Sir Sankaran Nair, to help him in his deserved progress. His brother, Mr. Narayana Menon holds a decent post in the office of the High Commissioner for India.

The late Sy. Lakshmikutty Amma, the first wife of Raja Kollengode, was an exceptionally good and generous lady.

The Raja was well-known all over India and respected by Indians and Europeans alike. His companionship improved her outlook on life and the knowledge of the world. They gave their children a liberal education and brought them up in a commendable manner.

Sy. Kamalamma has married Dr. T. C. K. Kurup, an advocate in Madras. Sy. Gowrikutty Amma is the wife of Mr. P. N. Menon, the retired Chief Justice of the High Court of Cochin and a grandson of my ancestor Mr. Neelacanda Menon, while Sy. Meenakshikutty Amma is wedded to Mr. K. K. Chettur who is high up in the Finance Department of the Indian Government. Mr. Govindankutty Menon holds a German Doctorate in Agriculture, and is now a prominent Officer of the Indian Government. He is a simple, sincere and straightforward person, and we like each other much. Mr. Padmanabha Menon has a handsome place in the Railway service. Mr. Narayanankutty Menon is a much-travelled young man and owns a wide culture and a facile pen. To recuperate his health, which was not of a robust nature, he had to spend some years in Switzerland. All who know him like him for his ways and obliging disposition. To both Kamalam and Narayanankutty I am much attached. Sy. Saraswathykutty and Sy. Kalyanakutty, the daughters of Madhava Raja Ayl. and Mrs. P. N. Menon are graduates of the Madras University. I have always sincerely loved my relatives and friends, and tried to serve them in my humble way; and, in spite of the disparity of age, I have moved among my grand-nieces and grand-nephews as a friend, and I am happy to say that it has been possible for me to gain their affection and to retain it.

Dr. Krishna Menon, at one time, set up practice

at Ernakulam. In his early days, when first I called him for consultation, I sent him his fee with a view to assist him to struggle up with strength. But he sent it back with this letter:

Ernakulam,
28-8-1921.

"My dear Kochamman,

Thank you very much for the amount, but I cannot find any excuse to accept it. If any service rendered to you would help in any way to liquidate the heavy obligations I feel I am under to you, I shall be quite satisfied.

So I request you will kindly allow me to return the amount, but continue to be of service to you.

Yours affectionately,
Kochappan."

To cover part of the expenses of their costly collegiate studies, I used to send monthly remittances to Narayana Menon, Ramankutty Menon and Madhava Menon. Ramankutty Menon once disappointed me in my expectations about him. Even then, I did not stop the help he was getting from me.

Trivandrum,
10-1-1914.

"My dear uncle,

I am allowed to appear only in the optional subjects. I worked systematically . . . With all that I blame only myself. However, I hope you will view the matter kindly and extend your helping hand to me till I am able to support myself.

Yours affectionately,
Ramankutty."

He did a sensible thing ; he took up Sanskrit and Malayalam, worked hard, and passed in both in the second year he was in the B. A. class.

Narayan Menon went up to Madras and joined Presidency College. To make his course there smooth, I had written to Sir K. Ramunni Menon, who was then a Professor, and to Dr. Subba Rao, who was in the Cochin Service, but who was then practising as a Triplicane.

Victoria Hostel, Madras,
28-1-1108.

My dear uncle,

I saw Mr. Ramunni Menon the very day I came to Madras. Though he is reputed to be an extremely reserved man, he spoke to me for some time, and asked me to go to him whenever I wanted his help. I saw Dr. Subba Rao also. As you had written to him that I am a reserved boy, he asked me not to be reserved at least to him, and that I could go to him whenever I wanted him to do anything for me. . . . On the whole, I thought the hostel to be a convenient place.

Yours affectionately,

Narayan Menon.

On his return from Madras, after taking his degree, he got a footing on Rs. 40 in the Office of the Conservator of the Travancore Forests, at Quilon. This appointment I am indebted to my friend, the Conservator, Krishna Pillai. "Diwan was kind enough to write him a letter to the Conservator of Forests service write to your nephew to accept any place that is offered to him by the Conservator. . . . The Diwan finds it impossible to get a scholarship or to give him an appointment in the Agriculture Department". So my friend wrote to me.

When I wrote to my nephew soon after to apply for a scholarship which the Cochin Government offered

for the study of Forestry in Oxford, evidently he did not like the idea of being disturbed from his second place. I had to send him a second and a stiff letter to induce him to comply with my request. When there was delay in the disposal of the applications, my official friends privately told me to see His Highnesses on the subject. I thanked them for the advice, but definitely declined to follow it. Both of them knew that Narayana Menon was my nephew and more than that, he was the only one among the aspirants for the scholarship who had studied Botany. He got it and I was asked to execute a surety-bond for, I believe, 10,000 Rs.; it was cancelled after he served the State for 10 years.

On the 14th of May, 1914, Sir A. R. Bane wrote to me from London about my nephew in the following terms: "I have heard nothing regarding your nephew since I arrived. Perhaps now that I am no longer Dewan, he did not care to take the trouble to come and see me . . ." Those words had a smarting effect on me; and I wrote to Narayana Menon somewhat severely on his conduct. So I was glad to read the next letter from Sir Banerji which had these few sentences about him. "3rd July, 1914.—I am very glad to say that your nephew came and called me in London soon after I had written to you and explained to me the reason why he had not done so before. During my recent visit to Oxford, my friends with whom I was staying were very kind in asking him to dinner one evening, and gave him a standing invitation to their house during his stay at Oxford. I am, on the whole, pleased with the progress he has made in his studies. I only hope that in the end he will justify his election".

While in England, the German War was about to upset his studies. When it broke out, he was working in the German Forests. Let him tell the rest of

'The George Inn',
Great Missenden, Bucks,
28th August 1914.

My Uncle,

I received your letter when I returned to Oxford Germany on the 15th instant. For about a month before the commencement of the war, all communication between Germany and foreign countries was stopped. Only letters written in German were accepted at the Post Offices or delivered to the addressees. After England joined the war, all communication between Germany and English possessions was stopped. So that, for the last four weeks, I neither received any letters nor have I been able to send any letters home.

The developments leading to the war were so sudden that the news of the outbreak of the war took us by surprise. Till England joined the war, we did not worry ourselves much about the matter. But when England once joined, we had to think of escaping out of the country as soon as we could. Or, otherwise, our chances of getting back to England when we wanted would be uncertain, and we could not get even our money from England. So our position in Germany would be an awkward one. So, the very next day after hearing that England had joined the war, we left Langen. We formed a party of seven Indians, including Mr. Rama Rao, the Travancore Conservator under whom I served, and Mr. Danukoti, the Travancore Scholar, who subsequently became the Conservator there, both of whom had come there on a visit to the forests. When we started, the train services had all been upset, most of the trains being utilised for purposes of mobilisation, and we were not quite sure of a safe passage to England, as there were rumours that the Steamer Service had also been interrupted. Anyhow, instead of facing the prospec

of staying there for an indefinite period without communication or money, we decided to make an attempt to get through. We travelled to Cologne without any serious trouble. When we reached there, we were told by the military authorities that we could neither proceed further nor to Langen where at least we had some friends said that we could amuse ourselves as best might at Cologne, but, if we attempted to leave place, we would be severely dealt with. That was strict military order. We found ourselves in an awful predicament; our funds were running out; they could not last at the most for more than 3 weeks; we had no friends there; and we did not know how long we might have to stop there. It might be till the war was over for aught we knew. That night we could not get any decent quarters to stay, as it was too late, and, on the whole, spent a miserable night. The gentleman who we expected to help us in our trouble, viz. the English Consul had left the place. We heard however that the American Consul was looking after the British subjects also. So, next morning, we went to him, and though he was not able to give us much hope about our deliverance, we were cheered up a bit to see in his office a great number of English subjects in the same plight as ourselves. So we had nothing else to do but to calmly surrender ourselves to our fate; and selecting cheap lodgings which happened to be comfortable also, we settled ourselves there, knowing we could continue our free existence for 3 weeks at any rate. We explained our circumstances to our landlord, and he and his family treated us with all kindness and attention. Thanks to our lucky stars, our deliverance came sooner than we had expected. On the 4th day of our stay there, we got the news that a steamer was leaving Cologne for Holland the next morning carrying American

and British subjects. So we packed our things which were not many, as we had left most of our luggage at Langen owing to the difficulty of carrying them — got the necessary passports and started off, thinking that we were about to see the end of our troubles. But that was not to be. All long the river, there were military and police patrols who had to be satisfied, and sometimes we were sent backwards and forwards. That was however a small matter. When we came near the German frontier, our worst trial awaited us. At the last German fortress, by the frontier at Wesel, the German Commander came on board and thought it his duty to detain all British subjects between the ages of 20 and 45, as he had read in that day's paper that England had done so with German subjects. So we too had to get down, being British Subjects. At the last moment, we remembered we were Native State subjects—and all of us happened to come from Native States—and as they did not understand the exact relation between England and the Native States—we too were not just then very anxious to explain the matter to them—we were let off and permitted to go back to the ship. About sixty English men have been detained there. They have not yet come, and it is not known when they will be able to come.

After this, we had no further trouble. We got safe back to England on the 13th instant; on the 14th, I went to Oxford where I spent about a week. Then we were asked by Sir William to come here to the Earl of Buckingham's woods for a fortnight's stay to study the working of the forests here. We came here on the 26th and shall be returning to Oxford by the 8th of September.

Ever yours affectionately,
Narayanan."

Those war years live in my memory like a hectic dream. War, as John Hary remarks, is one of the

most futile and ferocious of all human follies.

After his return from England, he was at first appointed as a Working Plan Officer in the Cochin Forest Department. Then he became the Assistant Conservator. When the office of the Conservator became vacant, I came to hear that the Dewan was being flooded with anonymous petitions from those who were afraid of my nephew's integrity and from those who wished to espouse the cause of their relatives who, but for my nephew, so the miscreants thought, would get the place. So, when next I saw him, I requested him not to be influenced by anonymous petitions of interested parties, but to give my nephew a chance as he was the proper claimant for the place. I also told him that it was not in my line to make a representation like this, and I made it as the interests of justice demanded. Not a word the Dewan said by way of answer. But I knew my words went home, and immediately after, Narayna Menon got the order of appointment which, as my nephew correctly surmised, relieved me of the anxiety I felt on his behalf, and his letter gave me the satisfaction that my efforts had not been in vain.

Chalakudy, 17-9-07.

"My dear uncle,

The copy of the orders on the arrangements consequent on Mr. R. M.'s retirement I am enclosing, will I am sure, besides relieving you of some of your anxiety on my behalf, give you the satisfaction that your efforts have not been in vain . . .

Ever yours affectionately,

(Sd.) Narayanan."

This was the second occasion on which I went to a Dewan to befriend an individual. The first

time was to help the brother of the late Mr. T. S. Sesha Iyer, who retired as the Sarvadhikari of the office. He, when he was a clerk in the Huzoor Office, came to me one morning to tell me that his brother, a bright boy, who had passed his Matriculation from the local High School, which then formed part of the College, was refused admission to the F. A. Class, because he had not put in the needed application to get it. He said that his brother was under the impression that he would, on passing the examination, automatically be promoted to the next higher class of the institution. He prayed for my kind offices, for, he said, his finances did not allow him to send the boy elsewhere. So, I made it a point to see Sir J. Bhore, who was the Dewan then; and, during the course of the conversation at the interview, I drifted to this new doctrine of Mr. Davies. He asked me to explain the point fully which I did and quoted this boy's pitiable case as an instance. I found I had evoked his sympathy, and, therefore, I asked Seshu Iyer to prefer an appeal to the Dewan. The boy got admission. Some months after that, the Dewan asked me "How is your protegee progressing?" At first, I did not understand where he was driving me. Seeing my surprised look, he told me what he meant. Then I told him I had not seen the boy at all, and explained to him the circumstances which forced me to talk to him about Seshu Iyer's brother. "You did well to bring the point to my notice," the Dewan kindly said to me. I felt elated by his compliment.

4. My days in the Tharavad House.

I have tried, several times, to visualize the face and form of my father. But to my dismay I have not succeeded as yet. I cudgelled my memory, I asked my friends and relatives to know how he looked. But in vain. Perchance, he was so elusive in his make-up.

Once it seems, he amazed an educated, critical audience by acting the part of Hanuman in the *Kalyana-Saṅgandhikam Attakatha*. "Who is he that comes? Is there none to rival him?" That was the *padam* which he had to act; and the conditions were that he was to sit all the while, and could use only the eyes and the facial muscles. He did his part so well that His Highness the Maharaja gave him rich presents and had his picture painted in that posture. I was not able to get at this painting even, for those in the palace did not know where it was preserved. He was bald; he had a round, smiling, generous face—these I vaguely remember. Every morning, when he took his meals, I used to get a ball of rice mixed with curds, and, on nights, he used to croon me to sleep with all sorts of funny songs which he improvised. But the one incident that has indelibly impressed on my memory is my being taken round his covered body by old Ayyappan Nair, the storekeeper of Dewan Sankunni Menon, before it was taken to the place of cremation. After that, I was taken to the gate-house where I found my two sisters crying. I could not say where my brothers and eldest sister were. I did not cry. I do not know why; probably because I found my mother directing the procedure with a courage which I was able to appreciate only in after years. O dear brave mother! What all thoughts must have flitted across your memory! How heroically you suppressed your acute agony to do the last honours to your beloved partner!

Years after, in 1946, I had the pleasure of seeing my father for a few seconds. I was observing on that day the fast for the performance of his Śradham the next day. At about 2 P. M., I was lying on my easy chair. I was wide awake, and reading *Bhagavadgītā*. Just then, about four yards away, near a rose-plant, his apparition, in a light rose-colour, was clearly seen by me. What a happiness I felt, I alone can realise.



Mr. T. Madhava Menon.

We were, at the time of my father's death, living in the place, now known as Kumarayam, but which was then called Thekkay Madham, which my father had built for his wife and children. It is a lovely place, with a road in front and the lagoon at the back. Though in the town, yet you feel as if you are far from the maddening sounds. Chattampi Swami used to say that, when he was here, he used to get the air and repose of a hermitage. The same remark was made by several others, particularly by Dr. Sunithi Chatterji, Dr. Lekshmunaswami Mudaliar, Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy and Swami Siddheswarananda. I do not know when exactly we shifted from here to the tharwad house. Kumarayam at Ernakulam and Lily Lodge at Trichur have so worked into the mosaic of my life that I cannot refer to them except with lively and holy emotion.

After the death of my father, Mr. Kochulla Menon, who was then managing the affairs of the family, advised my mother to go over to the family residence as, by doing so, she could live with her children more comfortably than in the madhom with the limited resources at her command. Dewan Sankunni Menon also sent word to the same effect. This I heard from my mother after I grew up.

Kochulla Menon was the only living issue of Kunji Anna, a sister of my mother's mother. His uncle Mr. Neelacandha Menon, was alive then; but he lived practically with his wife and children. Kochulla Menon was a very good man, and he conducted the affairs of the family so admirably that every one liked him and respected him. On 31st September 1879 occurs a prophetic remark in Dewan Sankunni Menon's Diary. "Kochulla Menon died. He was a clever and good man. I fear the family will greatly suffer by his loss." It did.

When we went to the Tharwad house to live there, my grand-mother and her other daughter,

time was to help the brother of the late Mr. T. S. Sesha Iyer, who retired as the Sarvadhikariakkar. He, when he was a clerk in the Huzoor Office, came to me one morning to tell me that his brother, a bright boy, who had passed his Matriculation from the local High School, which then formed part of the College, was refused admission to the F. A. Class, because he had not put in the needed application to get it. He said that his brother was under the impression that he would, on passing the examination, automatically be promoted to the next higher class of the institution. He prayed for my kind offices; for, he said, his finances did not allow him to send the boy elsewhere. So, I made it a point to see Sir J. Shore, who was the Dewan then; and, during the course of the conversation at the interview, I drifted to this new doctrine of Mr. Davies. He asked me to explain the point fully which I did and quoted this boy's pitiable case as an instance. I found I had evoked his sympathy, and, therefore, I asked Sesha Iyer to prefer an appeal to the Dewan. The boy got admission. Some months after that, the Dewan asked me "How is your protegee progressing?" At first, I did not understand where he was driving me. Seeing my surprised look, he told me what he meant. Then I told him I had not seen the boy at all, and explained to him the circumstances which forced me to talk to him about Sesha Iyer's brother. "You did well to bring the point to my notice," the Dewan kindly said to me. I felt elated by his compliment.

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him and obeyed him with the utmost willingness. After his death, Mr. Raman Menon came to the helm of affairs. Mr. Gopala Menon lived in his wife's house. One of his daughters was married by Mr. K. P. Sankara Menon, who retired as a High Court Judge of Travancore, and the other by his brother Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon, the great lawyer and historian of Cochin and of Kerala. Mr. Sankara Menon, Gopala Menon's brother, was employed as a village officer in the Mukundapuram Taluq, and his yearly visit, with lots of leaves and vegetables, just before Onam, was a welcome event in the annals of our family. Kochugovinda Menon came home for his meals. Narayana Menon lived in an outhouse in the premises of the family residence. I shall stop here, as my life is not concerned with the solemn marshalling of these shades.

The compound in which our house stood was a very large one; and the house too, an *ettu-kettu*, was a commodious one and comfortably provided bed-rooms, store-rooms and dinner-halls to all the inmates of the house. There were three tanks, and any number of fruit-trees, besides innumerable cocoanut and arecanut palms. During the fruiting season of the mangoe-trees, we the youngsters practically lived under them during daytime. On the day the house was thatched every year, it was indeed a festive occasion to us all; for, after the old leaves are removed, and before the new ones are fixed, all of us would troop to the loft and reconnoitre the place and play there; and, in the evening, we got a sumptuous supper. On other days, we had our usual games, such as football, hide and seek, blind man's bluff, playing as master and students, and numberless other innocent amusements, improvised or those already on the traditional list. At times, the old surveyed while the young played; but, as a rule, we were left much to ourselves to play, to fight or to settle

our disputes amicably. Those were glorious days when, without any worry or sense of responsibility, we let ourselves go, and grew strong in body and in mind.

Though, perhaps, as the last born, I was petted by my mother, still she had the spartan texture in her constitution. Early morning, between 4 and 5, she would come to me with a mango-leaf and a vessel of water. When I take my memory back to those early days, that is how it first comes in contact with my mother. I speak of men and events long past, over whom the twilight of uncertainty has already begun to cast its shadows. But, somehow, through the long vista of departed years, I remember those days better than the later ones. Kandanathappilli Kunjan Menon had charge of me; he did the work of a governess so to say. This Kunjan Menon was a cousin of Rama Menon who was the earliest tutor to the two Dewans, Sankunni Menon and Govinda Menon. He called my mother Imbavu and me Aniyam. I distinctly remember his requesting my mother, "Imbavu, let Aniyam lie down and sleep a little more. Is he not a child?" I was only six years old then. She did not allow his prayer, and, then, from her I inherited my capacity for increasing industry and my inability to sleep for more than six hours a night. It was this Kunjan Menon who later on taught me to read *Ramayana*. After supper, I read a few lines every day from a *grandham*. One incident I remember very well. Before Sri Rama started for his *Vanavasa* (forest-life), he goes to his mother Kausalya to take leave of her. She was then, pious soul, engaged in prayers for the successful close of the ceremony of crowning his son as the Heir-apparent. On seeing him, she asks him, 'What, my son, why does your face look so faded, are you hungry?' I could not proceed further, I began to shed tears, and my throat got choked. We had to stop reading that day.

Daily, after I cleaned my teeth and washed my face, I had to join her in the morning prayers. There were a number of hymns which I had to daily repeat with her and which I thus learnt by heart. By six, I had again to clean my teeth and rinse my mouth before bath, after which I had to go and worship in the great Siva temple. On the first Tuesdays and Fridays of every month, I was taken to the Baghavathi temple, and, on Ashtamirohini and the anniversary of my birth-day, to the Sri-Krishna's temple at Ravipuram. To the Siva temple I invariably went with my mother.

One day, as I was going round the Siva temple, with an arm of mine clasped in one of hers, and asking, in spite of her behest to me to pray and not to molest her devotion, a lot of questions on disconnected subjects, as children usually do, Ayyappan Nair came and told my mother, "Master has asked me to take the boy to him." "Uncle Dewan wants you; my son may go with Ayyappan Nair; I shall wait for you here," so said my mother. I insisted on her coming with me. She, however, persuaded me to accompany Ayyappan Nair to Krishna-vilas, which was then known as Easvaraswami madham, the residence of the Dewan. Mr. Sankunni Menon was seated on a couch at the southern end of the western verandah, upstairs. His brother Mr. Govinda Menon, and Mr. T. C. Kochunni Menon, who was the Huzoor Registrar (now called the Supt. of Registration), were standing a little away from him to the north.

When I was taken to his presence, Mr. Sankunni Menon called me to his side, and kept me close to his body. He asked me what I had in my closed palm. As an answer to the question, I opened it. It was a ball of jaggery which I got from the temple. . . . "Who gave it to you?" he asked me. "Ernakulathappan", I said, (meaning the God in the Siva temple). On hearing this reply, he put his right palm on the crown of my

head and said, "You will become a good, clever person." Then he looked at my face closely and remarked to those about him, "He has got the look of Mr. Ballard." I did not know at that time what he meant by those words. But, afterwards, I came to understand that that British Resident too had a congenital squint like mine. I was in a hurry to get back to my mother, and so I made bold to ask the Dewan, "May I go?", and worshipped him with both my closed palms with the jaggery between. Evidently, he was touched with that act of mine, for which the credit must go to my mother: for she had whispered into my ears that I should do so when I went into and came back from the Dewan's presence. As I entered, I was puzzled, because that was the first occasion when I went there, or, for the matter of that, I may say the first time I was taken out, except, of course to the temples. As the Dewan was guiding me to the staircase, Mr. Kochunni Menon said that "I was a girl." I did not like that joke, and so I looked at Mr. Sankunni Menon's face as if to appeal for help. He said something to Kochunni Menon in English, and, turning to me, consoled me by saying, "He is envious of your long and curly hair." Then he directed Ayyappan Nair to take me to his daughter, who was then residing with him, before I went back to my mother. He also ordered him to send all the packets of fruits and other sweet things intended for me to my house. That interview is indelibly impressed on my mind.

Mr. T. C. Kochunni Menon, the Huzoor Registrar (the Supt. of Registration), and Dr. E. Rama Warriar who, as a college student, was residing in the Easvaraseva Madham, used afterwards to call me Ballard. Ayyappan Nair advised me to call him a "temple bull" who called me Ballard. I did so, and that retort shut their mouths.

My mother would never allow me to eat or drink anything before the morning worship in the temple,

unless of course there was some pollution in the family. Even then, the bath could not be avoided. In the evening, too, she insisted on my being taken to the temple, after which, many of us, young and old, would join together to chant hymns. I enjoyed this congregational worship; the words and the tune of several of the hymns gave me thrills. By this daily repetition, I learnt all those songs of praise by heart, and also several verses of Narayaneeyam by hearing my mother's recital of them.

5. My days in a Payal School.

It was not all play to the young folks of my family as one might suppose from my narration. During the regime of Mr. Kochulla Menon, there was method and strict discipline in the family, though he ruled it with love and not fear. Further, there was a school maintained in our family for the boys and the girls to learn Malayalam, Sanskrit and a bit of Arithmetic. It was presided over by Vennimala Rama Warriar. He had a deep scar on his forehead, and was stern to view, and 'the boding tremblers, learned to trace the day's disasters in his morning frowns.' But he taught well and attracted students from all over Ernakulam. When I began my studies there, the school was about forty strong, of which only six were from my house.

I joined it late. My *Vidyarambham*, that is, the initiation to study, was conducted by my eldest brother on a Vijaya-Desami day during the Dusserah (Navaratri), early enough. I must have been seven then. But, even after that, I was not coerced to attend the Asan's class. My elder brother had been to Bombay with his friend Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon. When he came back, he had brought for me a neat coat and cap. One day, I donned them and walked into that part of the house where Warriar was having

his classes. He sarcastically said that I was fit for only going about in grand style. His remark cut me to the quick. For, it was not a fact. The costly golden string my mother gave me for my waist I parted in favour of my eldest sister's only daughter, Parakutti. Even as a young boy, it required all the persuasion of my mother and of Mr. Muntempilli Krishna Marar to induce me to wear a few ornaments before I was taken to see the annual *aleksham* festival in the Ernakulam temple. Krishna Marar was an unusually clever man. It was given out in those days that he was one who had been blessed by the goddess at Mukambi, so skilful he was as a drummer and in other allied arts. He owned a lean, wiry frame. At times he would wear a moustache and have his t at the back of his head. To see the festival, he would take me with him; and, then, hand in hand, we would tour among the drummers and walk in front of the elephants. Only when it was time to join his work, he would leave me to my servant. He was a favourite of the then Ruler, to whom he never refrained himself from expressing freely. Once, it seems, His Highness got annoyed with him and said, so the rumour went, that he would be sent out of the State. To which threat Krishna Marar calmly submitted that he should be allowed a small wick as well. When H. H. realised that that remark artfully hinted the smallness of his country, he laughed and gave Marar a present. He was a welcome visitor to my house.

I went back, removed my dress and returned at once to learn the alphabet. The letters were traced on sand spread on the floor. Some were learning like myself the letters of the Malayalam alphabet, while others were studying *Amaram* or *Sidharapam*; a third set engaged itself in *Kavyas*, and a few in *jyothisham*. Our Asan managed this conglomerate set wonderfully. After I learnt my letters, I was given a bundle of *olas* (palmyra leaves) in which were

written one or two *ashtakams*, *vakyams*, and multiplication tables. Eight verses about Ganapathi, called *Ganashatakam*, and another eight about Sri Krishna, called *Makundashatakam*, I learnt. Then I learnt by rote the multiplication tables and the *vakyams*. These *vakyams* are cryptic phrases to facilitate the study of astronomy. Personally, I found no earthly use of them in my after life. As the course of study was the one prescribed by my father and scrupulously adhered to in the instruction of my brothers and sisters, I had to follow suit and cram up the verses, tables and *vakyams* without understanding the meaning. Similarly, my *Amaram* and *Sidharupam* and *Balaprabodham* I learnt; these of course helped me in my Sanskrit studies subsequently. To the surprise of my Asan I progressed in my studies very rapidly. He was so pleased with me that, on certain occasions, he would set me about to direct certain new arrivals in their early studies. The first *Kavya* I studied was *Sri-Ramodantham*; of this about sixty verses I learnt, and then I had a few cantos of *Raghuvamsam*. My oldest sister taught these to me. How much I liked the change! The subject and the mode of teaching were both after my heart. She would never reprove me, but, on the other hand, remove all the difficulties and even invite me to put all sorts of questions to her. It was a pleasure to learn under her. I must here state that even Rama Warrior, though he used the cane freely, never once touched me or abused me. In the first place, I never gave any occasion for him to do so; secondly, he had strict injunctions from my mother, whose good opinion he had to cultivate, to treat me very kindly.

Along with my Sanskrit studies, I had my lessons in English as well. A person called Perumbra Nayar was coaching two of my grown-up cousins, Narayana Menon and Kochukutta Menon, of the eastern branch of my house, and also Ittyanath Sankunni Menon,

in their subjects. They were then students in the High School. Narayana Menon died early, but Kochukutta Menon lived to be the Karnavan of his branch and to enjoy life in that capacity. Sankunni Menon went up for medicine, and entered the Cochin Service. He was well known as a clever physician in his time.

Every day, an hour in the morning and one in the evening, I had to spend with that tutor. He was a rough sort of a man, and looked like a cane incarnate. Even a smile was afraid to go anywhere near his face. He was harsh in his words, and always taught with a thick cane by his side. A part of Garthwaite's First Book in English, which spoke of a wet ant, a mad dog and a bad lad, I had to cram under him. Fortune favoured me, and I was able to get away from him before I was with him long. One day, his three pupils went out boating, without his knowledge, and neglected their studies. So, the next day, they were caned. Because I looked at the caning and cried, I got a good slap with his palm on my back. He did so, perhaps, not to leave any mark on my body; but it did; and, worse, I suffered from high fever for over a week. I was being brought up in an atmosphere of love and sympathy. Not a soul had till then beaten me or even abused me, because I was an innocent child, and, by my ways, was a favourite with all. Even to the cook, Narayanan Nayar, called Mani by us all, who had not a good word to anybody, I was a pet. Thus this severe and unmerited handling by a Squeers affected my nerves and brought about the rise in temperature. Every one in my house, mother, eldest brother and sisters were concerned over my illness, and felt confused as they did not know how I got it. After a week, when my brother was sitting on my bed and softly running his palm over my body, he asked me whether I knew what caused my illness. He plied me with a number of questions. I was too weak to answer all of them, but I told him what took

place in the other house, and, in doing so, I began to sob. He called our mother and narrated the story to her. Both of them comforted me, and assured me that I would never be sent to Perumbra Nayar again. Brother at once left us, and fetched the teacher and, but for mother's interference, he would have thrashed him, for he was terribly angry. When the Karanavan of the East Tottakadt heard of this incident, he was about to send away the teacher. There too my mother saved him.

In the course of another week, I got well, and had my bath. But that terrible experience haunted me for days. I was of a very nervous, sensitive nature. When ladies came to visit my mother, I used to go and hide myself somewhere, and refused to come for social inspection. Even now I am sensitive, after all these years of roughing in the world. To attend large parties and functions is to me a nerve-racking practice. An unpleasant remark about me or my character severely upsets me; while a kind word to me is more than a coronet. Luckily this was the first and the last thrashing I ever had to suffer.

My next tutor was no other than my father's nephew, Mr. Kunja Kutta Panikkar. He lived with my parents and had his schooling along with my brothers; and, even after the death of my father, he was with us for a very long time. At first, he was an assistant master in the Ernakulam High School under Mr. Sealy. Then he became an Inspector of Police under Mr. Gunther. This change of work my mother did not like. I was present when he came to ask her consent for his accepting the post. She said, "You are not fit for that place. There you have to hurt people. For you it is good to be in the school. That is my opinion. You may do as you like." By Mr. Pozhankara Achyutha Menon, a Police Inspector then, he was persuaded to believe that he would easily rise

in the Police service. But, as my mother rightly guessed, he turned out to be a failure. By training and temperament he was not suited for that sort of work, and so he was forced to retire before his time. Subsequently, he became a convert to Christianity. I wrote to him a long letter in which I tried to prove that the fundamental conceptions of all great civilised religions are the same, and that he need not have changed his faith and pained his wife. My letter, it seems, a Christian friend of his forwarded to a large Missionary Conference at Edinburgh. The President of it remarked that he was agreeably surprised to find a Hindu having such a critical knowledge of Christianity as was evidenced by the letter. This reply Mr. Panikkar kindly sent to me for perusal.

He always took a deep personal interest in my studies and welfare. Occasionally we used to correspond. I visited him at Kottayam when he was the Head of the Cambridge Nicholson's Institution, and at Irinjalakuday when he was in charge of the mission work of that district. He suffered mental agony in his last days. I mourned his loss very much.

II. My School days.

1. My days in the *High School, at Ernakulam.*

The present Maharaja's College at Ernakulam was called a High School when I joined it, though, even then, it was a Second Grade College. It was housed in a solid imposing building set in the middle of a spacious compound. There was a nice enclosed garden on the south of the structure, while shady, graceful trees dotted the compound here and there. The Public Library and Reading Room was located to the east of the school, in the same compound in an old building in which the first English School was originally started in Ernakulam. To the north of it

there was a large thatched shed in which Mr. Sealy's carpenters, led by that clever workman Kesavan, worked. These made articles of furniture for the schools and also public offices of the State, articles well-known for their durability, and neatness in workmanship. Mr. Sealy was a lover of neatness, order and discipline which pervaded the atmosphere of the college. Inside it if one chanced to go, one met with a symmetrical arrangement of the classes. First there was the Infant class; then there were three Preparatory Classes, Lower, Middle, and Upper; next came Classes I, IIB and IIA. All these were held in the first floor of the building. In the upper storey were the High School and College classes, called at that time III C, III B and III A, IV B and IV A, V to VIII. VI corresponded to the Matriculation, now known as the School Final Class, and the last two represented F. A., junior and senior. First in Arts forms now go by the name of the Intermediate classes. The Infant class and classes VI to VIII were held in separate rooms, while the twelve others were in the two halls. The matriculation class was Mr. Sealy's favourite class, and so was placed in the same small hall in which he conducted his office work, both as the Head Master and as the Director of Education in the Cochin State. When I was found fit for class I, which I believe would correspond to the present First Form, I was admitted into the school.

Mr. Kunjukutta Panikker started me in my school career as master of my form. He was very kind to me. At times he pretended to be harsh to his students, but had no twinge of anger. He was exceptionally neat in his habits; and his handwriting, both in English and Malayalam, was beautiful. He encouraged me in copying these from him.

The only student of that class whom I can now remember is one Gurunathan, a Pandi Pillay by caste. He must have been about 20 or 21 years old, while

the ages of the rest of us must have ranged from 11 to 14, I suppose; not more than that. Thus Gurnathan looked as if he was out of his element. He was unusually shy and sheepish in the class. He tried to be jocular at times. His age may explain and perhaps excuse his levity. He monopolised the last place in the class. Soon after I took my seat near him, he asked my name. On being informed of it, he said, "I took you for a girl!" I resented that remark, as I was not prepared to take it as a compliment. I had my curly hair on, and also my bangles and a necklace. But still Gurnathan knew that we were not in a mixed school. However, I complained to my mother, who kindly allowed my ornaments to be removed and all my hair, except that on the top of my head, cut. She was sad to see her pet son denuded of these.

Even after I joined the school, Mr. Kunjukutta Panikkar used to coach me in my lessons. On Saturdays and Sundays, and also on other holidays, I came to the Thackkey Madham to study under him. I was fond of boating, the rudiments of which I picked up during my yearly sojourn with my mother at Thottumukam, the watering-place that lay between Alwaye and Chowrah. In Moenam and Medam, the hottest months of the year, she used to go there for a change. The young people that accompanied her enjoyed the stay very much. For, they would be, during the greater part of the day, in the stream, bathing, swimming or boating. The elders helped them to be merry, and contributed to the general hilarity of the company. Many well-to-do people would be there at that time; and there would be visits and parties too.

While I went to study under my cousin, I used to go out in a small canoe, of course without the knowledge of any one in the family. Two boatmen, who lived on the western extremity of the compound, helped me with the canoe that was kept in their

custody. I had then no idea of the currents or of the depth of the river, and I now and then crossed to Venduruthi in my frail craft. This fascination for boating has remained with me all along; boatmen have complimented me on my skill at the oars. Even now, how much I long to have a pull at them. But let me go back to my school days.

From I A, I went to II B, where Mr. Abraham was then the class teacher. He was my master in III C also. Somehow, he was not able to control his class successfully, so that there were, now and again, rows and scenes. For the sins of certain unruly students, innocent boys also had to suffer, as, on certain days, the whole class was detained to a late hour by way of punishment. This procedure, instead of acting as a deterrent against further mischief, upset the discipline, because even little minds could see the iniquity of punishing the good for the wrongs of the guilty. In III C, the atmosphere was rendered further rough by the presence of Mathan Munshi. He was not able to enforce order, and his security, more or less, lay in the fear the pupils entertained to the class teacher. In II A, Mr. John Chandy taught well and kept the class in perfect order. His tall commanding presence showed that he was kind, but was also firm and stood no feeling. Though not so fastidious as Mr. Koshi, Mr. Chandy, like his countryman, always wore a spotlessly white longcoat and trousers. I had the good fortune to win a high opinion of both these teachers which I kept till they died. Once a student of his referred to him as the late Mr. Chandy in some reminiscences published in the *Maharaja's College Magazine*; at once Mr. Chandy wrote to me to tell the writer that he was alive and kicking as ever. Both Mr. Chandy and Mr. Koshi lived in their native place, Kottayam, to a vigorous old age.

Mr. Thummi who presided over III B had a severe, taciturn look. There came to that class, when

I was there, two students, T. N. Vydiyanatha Iyer and L. S. Narayana Iyer, from Irinjalakuda. They were reputed to be very clever and came with flying colours from their previous school in their native town. N. S. Subramania Iyer acted as their panegyrist. I turned out to be a stumbling-block to their triumphant career as I beat them hollow in every subject. But I took my success in a humble spirit, and there was no one to proclaim my glory. This irritated the newcomers, and they began to circulate false tales about me. All that I could do was to cry, because I was not prepared to play the dullard to please my unusual foes. My eldest brother came to know of this state of affairs; and he went and reported the whole matter to Mr. Sealy. Mr. Sealy caused a private enquiry to be made when he found Subramanya Iyer guilty of harassing me for no fault of mine, while the other two were only innocent participants of their over-zealous advocate's machiavellian methods. Mr. Sealy took the sinner to task severely, and I was after that left alone, unmolested, to pursue my studies. I was able to get rid of their attentions in another way. All on a sudden, without any previous notice, one day, Mr. Mani came to our class and examined us in English and Arithmetic. As a result of that, I got a double promotion to IV B. Although I had been doing very well in all the classes and getting prizes too, I was not prepared for this piece of good luck. I felt delighted over it; so were my dear mother, my sisters and brothers. By this promotion, I escaped III A where Mr. Kittu Master made the students cram up everything, even the names of all the counties of England. I am not joking; it is a fact. The well-to-do boys were asked to get him this and that. One day he wanted me, I was then in III C, to get him a small quantity of civet. I told him I did not know from where I could get it. Then, he told me, "When you come to my

class, I shall teach you from where you could procure it." I said then, if the wind blew like that, I shall avoid coasting there. So, after I began my studies in IV B, one afternoon, I went to see him. He patted me on my back and told me that I was a bright boy to have acted as I said. He was fat and had the look of a dwarf. He was inordinately fond of chewing. Kittu, I suppose, is a shortened form of Krishna, for his full name was Krishnier. The word Kittu also means "got" in Malayalam. Thus, it was common in his class to make fun on his name by students pretending to have lost something, and then crying out "Kittu, Kittu, Sir".

In class IV B, Mr. Puthenzhet Gopala Menon was the teacher. He and my brothers were great friends, and he called me Aniyam, which means a younger brother. In the class he treated all alike. He was an ideal teacher, and his character was exemplary. Subsequently, he was taken to the Revenue line, and he retired as a Tahsildar. Sir Rajagopalachari had a high regard for him. But, I was not destined to be under his care and tuition for a long time, as I was taken to Calicut by Mr. Kodthil Narayana Marar, who was then the second Assistant in Kerala Vidya Sala, now known as the Zamorin's College.

The name of the Ernakulam High School was high; and at no time more than it was under Mr. Sealy and Mr. Cruickshank. My pride in its past and my interest in its future are not killed by the changes it has undergone.

For all my masters I entertain a respectful regard. Mathew, the *matappidi*, went about in his slow and silent pace with his bunch of keys; while Bramshah, the peon, with his genial grin, welcomed every coming student, and got himself refreshed by the parting one.

The play-ground on the eastern side resounded

every evening with the hilarious shouts of students ; but my familiar haunts were the library, and gardens on the south and west of the building. I have wandered through many a wood; but the foliage of those early days, fresh and fair and green, have still a fascination for me. I value those days for "the cleanliness of their remembrances, the utter joyousness of their recollections."

2. My days at Trichur.

Before I leave to Calicut, it will be necessary to record the reason that took me there, and, also to briefly state a few facts of my early life. For about two and odd years, my mother was afflicted with a severe headache that completely baffled some of the ablest Ayurvedic physicians of Kerala. *Dhara, pichu, Sirovasthi* had no effect on her. She was a very brave lady and could suffer a lot; but the pain, at times, must have been so acute, that she would cry out. I slept in those days on a bed spread on the floor near her cot. Sometimes, I also would start crying with her, when that noble soul would compose me to sleep.

Hearing my mother was suffering from intense pain, the mother of the abdicated Ruler, (I use these words only to indicate the individual; for, at that time, the latter was only the second Prince of Cochin) came to Ernakulam. The Princesses in those days visited Cochin to worship their tutelary Deity, the Pazhayannoor Bagavathi, in the months of Kanni and Karkidagam, that is, when the *Nazarathri* and *Ganapathi-Homam* festivals went on in the Palace shrine. My father was the *Tasildar* in Cochin for a long time. Again, he was the officer who used to be in charge of the *Ulsavam* in the Trippoonithura temple and also of all important celebrations and ceremonies in the Ruling Family. That was how my mother chanced

to be liked by some of the elderly princesses, and my sisters, by many of the junior ones. The mother of the abdicated Maharaja regarded my mother as a friend. That was why she came to Ernakulam and insisted on seeing my mother. She told my eldest sister who had gone to the Palace to explain the state of health of my mother, "If Kuttipparu cannot come here, I will come there to see her." So, it was arranged that, when Her Highness' conveyance reached our gate, mother would go there to receive her. As a matter of fact, my mother was so bad that day that she had to be conveyed on a chair, and all her children who were at Ernakulam were present at the gate with her. The meeting was touching; Her Highness stepped out of the carriage, and placing her hands on my mother's head said, "Oh ! My Poornathrayeesa, I may my Kuttipparu be soon freed of her illness." There were tears in the eyes of all that had gathered there. Seeing me weep, Her Highness patted me and asked me whether I had not got the ball of rice she had sent me. For, it was Her Highness' usual practice to send from the palace meals for my mother and balls of rice made by Her Highness to all the children who happened to be at the station during the time of each visit. For that unalloyed graciousness, every one was highly grateful to Her Highness. Even at this distance of time, my old eyes get wet with tears of joy when I write these lines.

It looked as if Her Highness' prayer was soon answered. My elder brother, who was then the P. W. D. Overseer of the northern Division, had his headquarters at Trichur. He told my mother that a change of place might do her good, and pressed her to go and stay with him. I also joined in my brother's prayer and persuaded her to do so. I liked Trichur; it was a charming little town then. I had gone there once before during a summer recess. My brother used to take me round in his bullock-cart;

fearing to leave me alone, he would even take me with him when he went out on circuit. I enjoyed those trips as my dear brother looked after my comforts in a very loving manner. It was my eldest brother who first took me to Trichur. He feared that, because I had been brought up very carefully, travel by Kevallam, the large, covered, country travelling boat, and the jolting in a bullock-cart over twenty miles from Karupatanna to Trichur might upset me and make me sick. On the other hand, I slept very well at night, and liked the journey, on land as well. The places were quite new to me. The same mode of conveyance I had to use several times afterwards while going to Calicut and to Madras for my studies. I used to enjoy going in a boat and bullock-cart. In the latter too I slept like a top. At Karupatanna there is a small shrine dedicated to Sri Krishna, called by the charming name of Parigatapuram. The tank attached to it ordinarily held good water, and the priest of the temple was a pious and obliging Nambuthiri. There were a very few bad hotels about the place. After bath and worship, the Nambuthiri sent some food to the palace close by. After a light breakfast, brother took me to Irinjalkuday. There, at the residence of Mr. Paruvakkat Sankunni Menon, the Thasildar, we had our lunch. From there, one or two children of the Thasildar and his nephew, Narayana Menon, came with us. It was he who subsequently became the Diwan of Cochin. I distinctly remember my brother telling Narayana Menon in English in a jocular way that the eldest girl was to be his wife. That remark proved true.

To avoid jolting and a tediously long journey, mother was taken from Ernakulam to Trichur in a boat with eight rowers. At Trichur, she was placed under Anjeri Thirupad, a physician and friend of my elder brother. Both morning and evening, he would smear on the crown of the head a little red powder,

sindaram, mixed with a small quantity of medicated oil. After the seventh day, the virulence of the attack and the severity of the pain ceased, and, in another seven days, the headache completely disappeared. How pleased were we and how grateful to God and to the physician we were, we alone knew. To avoid a recurrence of the attack, she had a course of the *dāra* treatment also.

We all lived in a neat bungalow that belonged to the Karimpatta Kettilammas. Those ladies, mother and daughter, were the consorts of Kadathanat Rajas; that is how they came to be called Kettilammas. The mother, whose only son was Mr. Krishna Menon, who subsequently became the Sircar Vakil of the Trichur District Court, was a capable lady. But it was the Cheriya Kettilamma that appealed to me. She was kind to me and treated me as if I were one of her sons. She had a daughter, by name Lekshumikutty, (who became Valia Nethyaramma), and two sons. The last two were called Appettan and Appu, though their names were Raman and Govindan. She sang gloriously. It was at this time that I struck the acquaintance of Mr. Karimpatta Rama Menon who subsequently passed B. A., B. L., B. C. L., and the Barrister-at-Law Examinations and retired as the Chief Justice of the Travancore High Court. When I first knew him, he was, like myself, a student of the Fourth Form, corresponding to my IV B. We soon became friends. When our schools reopened after the summer holidays, it was with regret that we parted. There came the famous Trichur Puram while next I was at Trichur. At night, my brother took me with him. While we were going round, an arm of mine clasped in one of his, a certain person, covered with a red shawl, and with a stick in hand, approached us. I took him for a Nambuthiri at first. But he began to talk beautifully in English; and he clasped me in fond embrace, saying, "This is your brother

of whom you have told me so often." I could understand them very well; for both talked so nicely and so clearly and on subjects not unfamiliar to me. Finally, he said "You must send him to Calicut. There is no one at Ernakulam to look after his studies." He was none other than Mr. Kodthil Narayana Marar.

I believe my brother argued the point with my mother and got her somewhat reluctant consent to send me to Calicut. Soon after the recess, I left Ernakulam and went to Calicut with Chelayil Govindan Elayadam who was studying at Calicut for his F. A. examination.

3. My days at Calicut.

To start with, I did not like the change of school. I was unwilling to leave my mother and her caresses. With her, 'every hour was rich with love, and every moment jewelled with a joy.' Moreover, Calicut was so unlike Ernakulam; it was dirty and crowded. The faces were all new to me; and so too the books that I had to read in the IVth Form. Kerala Vidya Sala was then an old, rambling palace which did not compare favourably with the solid, grand edifice that housed the College at Ernakulam. Master, for that is how I have always called Mr. Narayana Marar, saw my perplexed look. So he asked me to live for some time with Mr. Govindan Elayadam whom I knew well. Elayadam lived away from the college, in a small house which, on one side, had rice-fields for its boundary. There was a nice tank close by, and one or two friends and classmates of Elayadam lived near us. These were also very kind to me. Karimpatta Rama Menon lived far away. Even after we grew old, in fact till his death, we generally called each other only by our names, in conversation and correspondence. Meaning therefore, no discourtesy, I may slip

into that practice in this work also.

The Karimpatta people lived at Chalappuram. They had a nice two-storied bungalow there of their own. Near them lived the Kannampra Nairs in another decent bungalow. These two houses stood in a detached plot of ground amidst corn-fields on two sides, with the village temple on the south and the temple tank on the west. Mr. Karimpatta Achyuta Menon, as the son of Kannampra Krishnan Unni Nair, who was then a Tahsildar in the British Service, lived with him. Mr. Achyutha Menon later on became the Government Advocate and a Judge of the Chief Court in the state of Cochin. He is still keeping his sporting instincts. His friendship, warm and sincere, I have been enjoying all these years without any misunderstanding between us to cloud its sacredness. I value it as he has had always a reputation for acute intelligence, integrity and straightforwardness. Here I wish to refer to one or two others as well whose friendship to me has ever been warm and constant from our early days up till now. They are no other than Mr. K. P. Velayudha Menon, a close cousin and son-in-law of the late Mr. K. P. Sankara Menon, Mr. Chorinjath Sankara Menon and Mr. V. K. Narayana Menon whom his friends called Pandi, as he belonged to the Pandikazhala Kuruppath.

Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, who afterwards became the Dewan of Cochin, was a classmate of mine at Calicut in the IVth and Vth Forms. As soon as I joined the class, Master told me one day, "Aniya, if you beat Narayana Iyer in the Fourth Form Comparative Examination, I shall give you a nice prize, and shall ask Govindu (so he called my brother) also to give you one." I was blunt and outspoken in those days. I fear I have been all along; and that characteristic of mine has been a bane and not a blessing to me. "How could I? All the books are new to me; and there are only a few months before me for the exami-

nation." The absence of wiles in me and my straightforward talk, I am glad to remark, attracted me to my Master. He requested Mr. Narayana Iyer, the class master, to coach me, which he did with enthusiasm. I soon became one of his pet students. When the results were out, Raman stood first, I was second, and Narayana Iyer was only third from Malabar. I got the two prizes: in the one from my Master, which was a book called *Science in Sport made Philosophy in Earnest*, Master had written these words: "In recognition of merit, and as an incentive to further industry." In the Middle School Examination also, we three maintained our respective positions: but in the Fifth Comparative Examination, I was first and Raman second and Narayana Iyer fifth from Malabar. In all these three examinations, all three of us were placed in the first class.

The study for the examinations no doubt plays an important part in the development of a student. But, personally, I think it was not the only one that mattered; and in my case it was of secondary importance. The friends you keep, the company you move in, the games you play and the books you read are of equal significance, greater than the mere cramming for success in the annual tests. During the time I spent at Calicut, I had every opportunity for improving myself and I can say that I tried to avail myself of every facility I had.

After the first month, I came to live with my Master. It is not my opinion only, but it is the opinion of all who knew him that he was an ideal man in every way. He had a noble presence, a deportment, graceful and dignified. As a school-master, as a judge of the Chief Court of Cochin, as a Diwan Peishcar there, he acquitted himself so creditably that he won golden opinions from all who came in contact with him. He even acted as the Diwan of Cochin, during the absence of Mr. Banerji on

leave. He was a scholar in English, and Tennyson was his favourite poet. He had a decided talent for writing distinguished prose. He had a smile for every one, and I have never seen him in an angry mood. A strand of charm worked into his words. When I joined the Kerala Vidya Sala, Mr. A. J. Atkinson was its Principal. He was a fat man and a disciplinarian, and went about in a big bullock-cart. That is all that I know of him. He has not left his mark on the College nor, for the matter of that, any impression on his students. Mr. Panchapakesa Iyer was the Vice-Principal. He was a very fair man, and one who took care to show off his beauty by his dress. He was teaching Mathematics, a subject which he knew well. But the most popular person in the institution was Mr. Narayana Marar. Every student liked him, worshipped him. To him alone came the boys for help and advice which he always gave with an encouraging smile. He taught them well and joined in their games. The address that was presented to him and his reply to it were considered models of such productions that many copied them and got up by heart. These, I believe, are reproduced in his life written by his nephew and son-in-law, the late Mr. Achyutha Marar. I had the privilege of helping him in writing the work.

At school, only once I had an hour with him. In the absence of the class teacher, he took Geography one day in the Fifth form. We were starting with the study of the African continent. As soon as he came to the class, he drew an outline map of Africa on the black-board. Then he said that every civilization was bottomed on a river, and linked the Indian one with the Indus, the Babylonian and the Chaldean with the Euphrates and the Egyptian with the Nile. He further went on to speak of the antiquity and the glories of the last one. He was so earnest in what he said, and his words were so simple and picturesque,

that his lesson left a clear impression in the minds of the students. He was a great friend of Mr. Charles G. Fagan, who succeeded Mr. Atkinson. Mr. Fagan was a finished product of the Oxford University. He was a "bit of a genius" as his tutors spoke of him. He knew a good part of Shakespeare by heart; there is not a line that Tennyson wrote that he did not know; and, as for Homer and Virgil, he could reproduce them, were all the printed books destroyed, from beginning to end. He took a personal interest both in the work and the play of the students. He died young. Had he been spared,

"He would have done,

Some great strong work here underneath the sun." There was in his outlook on life a vein of pessimism. "A walk through the streets of London would kill him"; so sensitive he was. After a visit to the zoo in Madras, he wrote an article, called the "Moral Pachyderms", the opening sentence of which was characteristic: "Long, lithe, feline animals with hungry eyes and a look of horrible hatred walked all day long in their cages, the victims of unsatisfied ambition; but, the rhinoceros, happy creature, chewed his grass, amidst blows and insults, sublime in massive stupidity". It was published in the *Christian College Magazine*.

Two students who frequented my Master's residence were Mr. Manavedan Raja and Mr. Vengayil Kunhi Raman Nayanar. They were then studying in the F. A. class. Their veneration for my Master was boundless. He was as charming as a friend as he had been instructive as a teacher. When the three met, there used to be lively, brilliant talks on a variety of topics. I was privileged to be present at most of these, and they were of great educative value to me. Mr. Nayanar liked me much. His only complaint against me was that I was always serious and very sensitive. He

belonged to an immensely rich family and took even his studies, in a leisurcly fashion. He made the world around him an enchanted pleassance. Genuine and genial humour bubbled up through his talk and writings. He was perpetually effervescing with fun. 'His anecdotes, inimitably told, had the fragrance of old vintage.' In after years, he started and edited the *Kerala Sanchari* for a few years. 'Journalism', he used to say, 'was literature produced in a hurry.' His articles, now collected in a book form, will never fail to enliven a weary hour of even a dullard. His friendship, warm and sincere, I enjoyed till his death. When I published, without any illustration, my wife's Malayalam rendering of *Aesop's Fables* as the first of the *Books for Malabar Bairns*, he wrote to me, (4-8-1898) "My wife has particularly asked me to write to you that she is willing to send you a small contribution—for plates for *Aesop's Fables*—as a token of her best regards for the very affectionate and highly cultured wife of her husband's dearest friend." He wrote to his son, Professor Candeth, to come and see me before he entered on his duties in the Presidency College, and to consider me as one of his best friends and well-wishers. I shall here quote a few lines from a letter, dated 18-12-1934, which Professor Candeth wrote to me soon after the death of his father: "During the last few days that he was with us here in Madras, he often spoke of you. He wanted me to meet you, and said it would give him much joy if I came to know you. The day before he was given his rest, he spoke of the letter he had written to you. . . . It meant a great deal to me to get your letter, and I hope you will always extend to me something of the life-long friendship which you gave to my father—Always yours M. A. Candeth."

Another devout admirer of my Master was Mr. Damodaran Nampoothiripad, the Pandit of the College. It was in Walluvanad, he would say, that the best

Malayalam was spoken and written. Whether he honestly believed it was so, or the words were only intended to tease me, I could not say. I would as boldly declare that it was in the state of Cochin, the centre of Kerala, that one could come across the best Malayalam. He was a great scholar and an equally great teacher, and from him I caught an enthusiasm for the cause of Malayalam literature. My love for English literature I must have unconsciously imbibed by observing the example of my revered master and my brother to whom I owe not a little for what I am. Their personal influence was to me more potent than many precepts, their example more than any amount of moralising. These have sunk deep into my plastic boyhood.

The dedicatory epistle addressed to my master in the second edition of the *Prachinayazartham* is reminiscent of those days. "I had the privilege of coming, for a brief period, under your influence and of sharing the genial warmth of your society. I was then in the golden season of youth when life bounded and danced within me to the tune that hope warbled in my breast; and the vision of my future was gay, and joyous, and of unending success and peace. This morning dream has now passed away, leaving behind it sadness and a vague unrest. But, in the midst of its ashes, there still glows and, I trust, will ever glow the memory of the loving and watchful care you then bestowed on me, and the shining example you, then, and have ever, set of unvarying courtesy, gentleness and truth." What can my pigmy words do when the gratitude I owe him is of Himalayan magnitude?

After I passed the Fifth Comparative Examination, my master asked Raman and myself to join the Native High School then newly opened by his friend, Mr. Ganapat Rao. At first, I did not like the idea of being shunted there; but when I came to know Mr. Ganapat Rao, I even ignored the loss of the scholar-

ship I sustained by the shifting. Mr. Ganapat Rao was an ideal teacher. In Chemistry, he was an Arni medalist. His general learning was wide and deep, and his exposition was clear and warm. He took a personal interest in my studies. He would invariably ask me to go to him to assist him in getting the apparatus ready for showing experiments in our chemistry hours. But I could not be with him long. A severe attack of dyspepsia forced me to discontinue my studies and to leave Calicut to Ernakulam. How I acquitted myself at Calicut will be seen from the following certificate and letter which I am proud to possess.

Native High School, Calicut,

9th July, 1886.

"I have known T. Kunju Krishna Menon as a student under me for nearly a year. During this period I have always found him obedient and modest, and, in short, possessing all those qualities which a student ought to possess, and which endear him to his master. He is the first boy in the Matriculation class of my Institution, and in him I lose one of the brightest students that I can expect to have for some time to come. His composition is marked by a facility which is rare among the students of his class, and indicates more general reading than a student of his position ordinarily possesses. He writes moreover a fair and legible hand, and is exceptionally neat in whatever he does. From what I know of him, I must think that he will be very successful either as a student or as a man of the world."

(Sd). D. Ganapat Rao., B. A.,
Headmaster."

Calicut, 5th March, 1887.

My dear Aniyar,

To make a confession, my conduct towards you

is blame-worthy but not such as you cannot yourself palliate. For I am sure that should you only regard this apparent neglect on my part, as I expect you to do, in the light of the longish experience you have had of me, you would consider it to be simply in keeping with my unaltered self and nothing extraordinary. You cannot require to be told that it was not from any want of regard for you that I have been silent till this time, nor that, so far at least as you are concerned, I remain unchanged and shall for ever remain unchangeable. In fact, to my mind, I should be doing an injustice to you if I considered that you stood in need of being assured of any such thing; for we know each other much better than to require such assurance. The warmest, the truest, the kindest regards, my dear Annyan, are still mine towards you. Would that you could realize just for one moment the extreme desire I feel to have you still with me that I may have the pleasure of yet further assisting in the unfolding and developing of your young mind, (than which a more genial, more delightful work I cannot imagine for myself) especially as I found in you a near approach to my ideal of a student, obedient, respectful, confiding and truthful. But have I gone too far? Have I transgressed the limits proper to be observed in addressing young people if it is intended to keep their heads from being turned by too much of complimentary terms heaped upon them? I believe not in your case. For had I not the fullest confidence that your head, which though young in years is yet in my opinion mature in wisdom, would not be turned by any amount of gratulatory terms addressed to you, and were I not under the impression that the direct declaration of my opinion about you would have the certain effect of making you endeavour to sustain it and strive, if possible, to improve it, I would not, to be sure, have spoken in the strain I have done.

I have no doubt you will fully realize all my expectations of you. The only thing I am afraid of in you is your health, the indifferent state of which is due, I think, rather to that nightmare of an idea of disease that haunts and troubles you than to anything else. I extort you to shake that off. Your letters are so taken up by complaints that they contain very little of particulars of personal interest. Tell me all about you: What books you read, what exercise you take, what company you keep etc. Write to me as often as you can, my remissness in the matter of regularly replying to them notwithstanding.

You will be pleased to hear that I am getting on well, my practice gradually improving. You know perhaps that it is not mine to shine forth in sudden brilliance. With me slow but sure would be about the truth. The prospects are good. The only thing is I am a little distressed in mind at the present moment on account of my sister's protracted illness as also that of my wife.

Believe me,
My dear Aniyar,
Ever yours,
(Sd), K. Narayana Marar."

4. My days in the Thekkey Madham.

In April, 1886, I left Calicut to Ernakulam. By that time, my mother, eldest brother and two sisters had taken up their residence in Thekkey Madham, now known as Kumarayam. My elder brother and elder sister were then living at Trichur, the former as Overseer, and the latter with her husband, Mr. Karakkat Narayana Menon who was the Tasildar there. After the death of Mr. Kochulla

Menon, life in the family house was not pleasant; that was why mother shifted to her own place. Only after the partition in the family, early in 1970 M. E., when to mother's share the family house was allotted, she removed again to that place.

After I reached Ernakulam, I was placed under a native physician who advised me not to join the school before I got rid of my indigestion. Although, at that time, there were some who attributed my illness to my studious habits, it was not a fact. For, I prepared my lessons between 7 and 9 in the morning, and went to play with my master's cook, a smart Brahmin boy, who would be waiting for me after his work. An hour in the evening and a couple of hours on holidays, I devoted to general reading, which I immensely liked. I read carefully all the eleven or twelve books of *Laurie's Entertaining Library*; many of them several times. These I got down as advised by my master. Even in those early days, Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* and *Vicar of Wakefield* had become my favourites. Goldsmith I consider as the most lovable man whom English literature has produced. I liked Tennyson, a passion I caught from my master whose favourite poet he was. Mr. Nayanar helped me to read several of the short poems, even *Princess* and one or two *Idylls of the King*. I never worked then with lamp light. All the rest of the time I played. For sports, I went to Raman's place where we engaged ourselves in a variety of games.

There were others who thought that I kept back because Raman was sick, and so I did not like to steal a march over him. My brother was, at first under this impression. "With reference to your last note", he wrote to me, "expressing regret at the remarks I made upon your unwillingness to appear this year for the matric., I have to inform you that I was told by Marar that he had serious grounds to

believe that boyish regard for Raman stands in the way. While admiring the noble trait in you, I must at the same time tell you that the passing of examinations before Raman cannot in any way interfere with the close intimacy existing between you two. You need not on this account strive against health to pass the examination this year. I am confident that ordinary exertion is enough for you to pass it. The Tasildar and Mamar share in my opinion. If you think Calicut won't agree with you, as I think, you may speak to the Dewan (Mr. Govinda Menon), and try to get admission to the Matriculation class at Ernakulam. Let me however hear from you your opinion on the subject."

My mother was for my taking rest and recouping my health. She had the last word on the subject, and no body dared to contradict her. As a matter of fact, I am ready to own that my sympathy for Raman was no doubt at the back of my mind, but that was not the deciding factor. We were almost always together, in work and play; and it really pained me to see him suffer from a persistent fever. But I too was really ill.

A letter he wrote to me in the March of 1887, when we were in the Matriculation class, he at Calicut and I at Ernakulam, will indicate in some slight way the nature of our relationship.

"Still more majestic shalt thou rise
More dreadful from each foreign stroke,
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Will serve but to root thy native oak."

"Just so, my dear Todt, every plot that our enemies, under the mask of friendship, may concert to separate us will serve but to tighten the chords that bind our hearts. Neither time nor distance can undo those strings without a material injury to our hearts.

Now the keen axe of Dissension tries to cut the strings. So be on your guard. Your last letter consoled me a little. But it was Job's comfort, you see. Nevertheless, it was one of the best letters that you had written. This is no flattery. A nice sense of honour teaches me not to have recourse to that practice, and further my gratitude for the kind offices done by you shall never make me a sycophant. I end with a couplet of my own.

Who noble ends by noble means pursue
Will scorn those who try the friendship's
knot to loose."

To the last I remained true to him. But, some time after his return from England, I began to notice a change in him. The fine flower of his friendship began to fade. A cold, frigid atmosphere crept in between us, and I began to be slightly thrust aside while others got the mastery over him.

"They have been friends in youth,
But whispering tongues can poison truth."

So I once wrote to him. He replied that I was playing on my sensitive fancy. But there it remained till he confessed, while on his deathbed, that he had latterly misunderstood me and wiped his wrongs to me by his manly tears. But that is another story.

Though I did not join the school, I turned my time to good profit. I worked according to a timetable which fixed hours for walks, both morning and evening, study of text-books, general reading and composition. I paid attention to my mathematics, a subject that I liked very much. I wrote essays. Under Mr. Madhava Kurup of Thoravur, my youngest sister's Sanskrit Pandit, I read a few cantos of *Raghuvamam* and *Kumarasambhavam* and a portion of *Bhoja* (*Ramayana*) *Chamba*. My Sanskrit studies I had, off and on, till I left Ernakulam to Madras. A

small club, which met in my house, conducted weekly debates, and got down the *Progress*, the *Hope*, the *Benagali* and the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika*, and one or two English magazines of a purely literary sort. Our club consisted of only six members: V. K. Govinda Menon, a brother of Mr. V. K. Rama Menon who retired as a Settlement Peishcar in the State, and his nephew V. K. Kunja Menon, who, in after years, came to be known as K. M. to the literary world, P. Krishna Menon, the brother of Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon, K. Govinda Menon, the nephew of my brother-in-law, Mr. K. Narayana Menon who was for a long time the Dewan Peishcar and District Magistrate of this State, and C. M. Ramakrishna Pillay, a brother of Mr. C. M. Madhavan Pillai, a well-known Peishcar of the neighbouring state of Travancore, and myself. We all moved like brothers, and I was benefitted by their company. Mr. Govinda Menon retired as the Assistant Conservator of Forests of Travancore, and Mr. Palliyil Krishna Menon as a Deputy Inspector of Schools in Cochin. Mr. V. K. Kunja Menon was a well-known scholar. His learned commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* is very popular in Malabar. He has rendered into Malayalam the *Cochin State Manual* and Spencer's tract on *Education*. Mr. Ramakrishnan Pillay we called a walking newspaper. He was a very obliging friend, and, somehow, had a great liking for me. For an evening walk, an over-worked student could not get a better companion. He would rattle on. He had an infinite fund of information on a variety of subjects. Then, he was a good hand at inventing tales. But these were of the most innocent sort. He had none of the calumnies or unadulterated lies intended to kill an enemy or undermine his reputation. And as he had not the knack of vending his tales in that condescending manner, with that diplomatic reserve, and that definiteness in details, which some others

had, he could be easily found out. Mr. V. K. Rama Menon was at that time the Tasildar of Cranganore, and Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon, the Tasildar of Thalappilly. So, most of the members of our small club once went to these places and thoroughly enjoyed the stay with the elders. At Cranganore, we had boating, while, at Wadakkancherry, we scaled the hills near that place. Both the Tasildars, Rama Menon and Gopala Menon, while we were with them, used to give us interesting and instructive talks on various topics. My sojourn at Trichur I used to prolong to the utmost; for, there, my life with my brother in his Lily Lodge, that was the name I gave to his place, was very happy; there was further the library near it; I could see Raman daily; and the climate and the water of that place agreed with me wonderfully.

I fully agree with what Raman wrote about the charms of the place in one of his complaining letters to me:

"I own I cannot make out what induced you to leave Trichur so abruptly. To be sure, it cannot have been the difficulty, I ought to have said, the inconvenience to board yourself; for, with your brother, you can be quite at home. Surely, it cannot have been the difficulty to come at the books you wanted; for, pace a few steps from your dwelling, and you are in a pretty good library. Nor can it be the want of interest in the place; surely not. To me the town wears a romantic aspect. The untold physical beauty of the place; and the antique and charming pantheon which often reminds me of some fairy-castle of our tale-tellers; the stately arrays of dwellings which force us to say that it is a miniature city of palaces; the peculiar temper of the natives which has a tinge of chivalrous gallantry and which bears witness to the influence surroundings have of forming the temper, be it of individuals or of nations; all these, besides numberless others, endear the spot to every reflecting

man. But whatever may be the reason of your leaving it so soon, I was sorely disappointed, nay mortified, to hear that you were not there. But never mind of that. So long as I can handle a pen and can defray postal charges, I can talk to you".

While once at Trichur, I attended an annual meeting of the Cochin Reform Association, when Messrs. Caramana Krishna Pillai, Inspector of Schools in Travancore, C. V. Raman Pillai, the novelist, and N. Raman Pillai, the Travancore Excise Commissioner, who were guests of my brother, made nice speeches. These were then well-known leaders of the Nayar society in Travancore, and had come all the way from Trivandrum to take part in the deliberations of this association. The active promoters of the association were Messrs. Nallanat Narayana Menon, K. P. Padmanabha Menon, P. Gopala Menon and my brother. A copy of the first printed triennial report of the association lies before me. From it one can see that almost every person of note in Cochin, European and Indian, official and non-official, was its member. The advancement of Cochin in all directions was the main object of the institution. My brother owned no half-way house. He was independent and thoroughly outspoken. The word diplomacy was not in his dictionary. At times, his bluntness was embarrassing to the tactful persons who had to work with him.

While at Trichur, I was placed under the doctor in charge of the military Hospital there. At Irinjalakudai, where my oldest brother was the District Registrar, I underwent massage treatment. But my stomach still remained turbulent. Fortunately, Dewan Mr. Govinda Menon came to know of my continued ill-health. So he sent for me at a time when his doctor, old Mr. Gunther, had called on him. I was asked to give him a short history of my disease, and the modes of treatment I had till then followed. This was, as my diary tells me, on the 24th of December 1886.

Mr. Gunther asked me to see him next day in his house. That was the Christmas day, and I took some presents to him. Then he prescribed a course of treatment and diet, and directed me to continue it for one month. He was very kind to me and assured me that he would see me join the school on its reopening. So he did.

5. My High School days.

In my Diary I find these upsetting entries: "1887, January 17. Went to Mr. Gunther. He gave me some pills. May God make me well soon." Again, on the next day, "My present diet is unsuitable to me. I am to abstain from salt, chillies and buttermilk. How long am I to continue like this?" However, I once for all made up my mind to join the school. And, on the 22nd of January, my Diary notes, "Got a letter from the Dewan (G. M.) and with that went to Mr. Sealy for admission. Of course, he said he would admit me." I joined the Matriculation class. It was located in the small hall in the south wing where Mr. Sealy held his office. Mr. Bankara Narayana Iyer, a son of Mr. Appadurai Iyer, one of the officers trained under Dewan Mr. Sankunni Menon, was, for a long time, my class teacher. Mr. Sealy took science for us. In that subject, we had to study the Introductory Primer, Chemistry, Physics, and Physical Geography, Primers published by the company of Messrs. Macmillans. Mr. Sealy's hours were always very interesting. There was no lesson which he did not contrive to make interesting. He spoke swiftly; no one knew where he would lead you. But, before he left the class, he made sure that the particular lesson prescribed had not been shirked. Mr. D. M. Cruickshank had charge of the Matriculation Text-Book in English, while Mr. K. Koshi taught us the English Grammar, and Mr. Subramania Iyer, Mathematics. Mr. Mathen Munshi took us through the Malayalam Text. Of these masters

of mine I shall speak later on. I studied hard my lessons for the class, and also found time to devote to general reading and to attend to my garden which I had started in the middle of 1886. Among the books listed in my Diary, I find Adam's *Plain Living and High Thinking*, Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, Addison's *Spectator* and Beeton's *Art of Public Speaking* find prominent mention. Of course, Tennyson and Goldsmith I always had on my table. All these I read carefully. For exercise, I continued my walks. For, my mother discreetly kept me home, and never allowed me to go out to play or to visit class-mates.

The only exception she willingly made was in the occasional visits I paid to H.H. Ravi Varma, a younger brother of the abdicated Maharaja. He was also then preparing for the Matriculation examination. Though we first met in the August of 1886, it was only this year that I began to closely move with His Highness. He was the first member of the Cochin Ruling family to appear for a University test. I have always found His Highness a generous, gracious prince, studious and obliging. He was every inch a Gentleman; and an old aristocratic politeness hung about him. He had a heart so manly and so kind. His dignified, princely behaviour and his amiable manners used to be a subject of favourable comment among His Highness' friends, acquaintances, and class-mates. He owned an individuality of compelling charm; and he possessed as one of his dominant qualities a genuine delight to be of service to his friends.

Looking down the long perspective of years past, I can summon to the session of sweet silent thought a series of memories of his acts of kindness to me for which I am grateful to him. His friendship, serene and strong, has been to me a valuable possession. His Highness did not sit for the examination in 1887, as he was not confident of success; but yet he vigorously

carried on his studies. As desired by His Highness, I wrote to him how I worked and also took leave to give certain hints. The first letter which I had the honour of receiving from him was in reply to that.

Tripconithura,
4th December, 1887.

"My dear Kunjikrishnan,

I do not find proper words to give you the full expression of the great pleasure which I enjoyed when I read your letter of advice. I know you are busily engaged in your studies. Well, I have to ask you one favour, viz., to take particular care of your health on which depends every prospect of your future career.

I very well know how you my educated countrymen regard me; and I owe to their constant encouragement and advice the progress, if there is any and if there will be any, of mine in everything.

I will ever "allow you" to express not "a few words" but as many words as you can about my study which is my everything. Here I have to point out to you one thing in your note which I do not well approve of—your restrained remark about my English Composition. Express fearlessly all that you feel for my improvement. Never think that I shall misunderstand or misconstrue your meaning.

I want your suggestion on my extra-reading. Pray do not spend much of your precious time in writing to me or to any other man before your fast-approaching examination is over.

I am really sorry you concluded your letter so soon. But I know it is due to the want of time.

That you must be successful in your scholastic and other careers is the heart-felt prayer of your royal well-wisher

(Sd).,
Ravi Varma."

I had the good luck to start a Students' Association on the 20th of March 1887. It was named the Ernakulam Literary Union. The first meeting was held in the Old Press Hall, called the Pandemonium Hall in my brother's drama *Firebrand*. It was the birthplace and the cradle and, for some time, the place of meeting of our Union.

The Society was intended to promote a spirit of comradeship among students and to afford facilities for their general improvement. It was not confined to students. Mr. C. Achyutha Menon was its first President, and Mr. M. Sankara Menon its first vice-President. The first annual meeting was presided over by Mr. A. F. Sealy, when Mr. P. R. Sundara Iyer delivered an eloquent address on Modern India. Many officials and non-officials were among its Honourary Members. A few of its printed reports lie before me. From a consolidated report of the years 1887-1913, one can find that H. H. the Maharaja was its Patron, several Princes of the Cochin Ruling Family and the late Kerala Varma, C. S. L., Valia Koyil Thampuran, were its vice-Patrons; and my revered Master, Mr. K. Narayana Marar, was the President, and Messrs. Glyn Barlow and Kar. Achyutha Menon were the vice-Presidents in 1913. There were 77 Honourary Members and 57 Ordinary Members in that year. Messrs. T. B. Ramachandra Iyer, R. P. Parakkappye, K. Chandy of the Mysore Civil Service, Sir B. Ramunni Menon, Messrs. C. Mathai, K. P. Padmanabha Menon were among its Honourary members. In 1898, I had the honour of being elected "a free Honourary Member in recognition of the valuable services rendered to the Union". Meetings were held on every Sunday morning. Discussion and essay-reading on alternative days with recitation formed the business at the ordinary meetings. Essays were read and debates held alternately in English and Malayalam. Public meetings used to be held to hear others. Several

distinguished men have addressed these meetings. The Union owned a splendid library, one of the best of its kind in the State, stocked with English and Malayalam works of almost all well-known authors. Appreciating its necessity and usefulness, the Government was pleased to give the Union an yearly grant. The financial position of the Association was also always strengthened by donations from its well-wishers. The Union was thus able to help to begin a free Malayalam library and Reading Room in Ernakulam, to help students in Madras and elsewhere with small stipends, to offer prizes for stimulating a desire among the members for reading and writing, and to found an endowment in the name of a deceased young studious Prince for the annual award of a medal to the best student in the highest class of the Sircar Girls' High School in Ernakulam. Of this prince, H. H. Ravi Varma, who was then the 15th Prince, the report for 1894-5 remarks, "Adorned with every gift of mental grace, his dawn had given promise of a golden day. But this was not to be; and we are left to weave for ourselves the story of the what-might-have-been had he been spared to us."

The Report proceeds, "Misfortunes, it is said, never come single. The Prince was soon followed by his illustrious uncle, H. H. Kerala Varma, the Maharaja of Cochin. . . . It is not for us to look into what the Hellenic poet calls "the deep mystery of the cruelty of things." But we venture to anticipate that the new Maharaja will be spared long to us to carry out to perfection the wise reforms begun by his predecessor and to establish those liberal institutions, such as the Legislative Council, which are at once the pride and the glory of the civilised nations of the world. In that gladsome spirit borne of prospective glory we wish His Highness joy." The reply to the address we presented to His Highness contained these encouraging words: "I have been always taking a

deep interest in your endeavours to improve yourself morally and intellectually, and I promise to continue to do so. I join with you in hoping that I shall be able to adopt measures to promote the welfare of my people as I wish very much to see them happy and prosperous".

The Union moved the Director of Public Instruction to open good conduct registers in the High Schools of the State, and memorialised the Government to institute prizes to be awarded to the deserving students at the end of each year. The Director convened a meeting of the teachers at which these questions were discussed; but, as various difficulties were suggested in the way of carrying out the proposal, the matter was put off for further consideration. It also sent up a memorial to the Government when there was a proposal to enhance the school fees. It had the desired effect. To this a reference is made in the address the Union presented to Dewan Mr. Govinda Menon on his retirement. "Knowing as you do, the scanty average income of a ryot in this country, you have helped the cause of education in the State by opposing, so far as you could, the pressure brought to bear on you to enhance the fees levied on the students which, if it had been done, would have seriously hampered the progress of education in this State, without materially benefiting the Sircar Treasury". Even in small matters, the Union had the generous support of the Sircar. For, in 1901, it was allowed to hold its annual social gathering in the Durbar Hall, and the report adds: "that the society is deeply indebted to Messrs. S. Lockie (the First Judge,) F. S. Davies (Director of Education) and H.M. Brown (Excise Commissioner) for what they did towards the success of the gathering".

There were, no doubt, certain alarmists who said that the Union interfered with the studies of the students. To them we replied in these words in our

reports of 1895-7. "For the last 11 years, the Union has justified its existence. Tested by the results of public examinations, the credit of the society will not suffer; for all those who have passed with honours in the University examinations are, or have been members of the Union. We maintain strenuously that it was on account of their connection with the Union that several students were able to get through their examinations, while not a single student had occasion to point to the society as the cause of his failure to do so. Before we leave this subject, we wish to lodge our humble but very emphatic protest against the frame of mind of our critics which makes them declare, though indirectly, that true education consists in the acquisition of a capacity to pass examinations."

The very friendly attitude which Mr. Sealy, who had been the Principal of the College and Director of Education, took to this institution also served as an effective reply to those adverse critics of the Union. The high opinion which he entertained about this society was reflected in his reply to the validictory tribute the Union paid him when he severed his connection with his official position.

.... "Now I feel that there are not one or two but many among you to fill the place of any worker who goes away from the Indian field of labour. The educated sons of Southern India may now be counted by hundreds

"Let me give a word of kindly counsel to you, young men, who are members of the Literary Union, and it is this: Carry into your families, to your sisters, to your wives, to all those who cannot themselves attend the State schools, the knowledge you have yourself acquired and which brings you so much enhancement of your happiness. If any people are to become truly educated, both sexes must share in the learning.

... "I would strongly commend to your careful perusal the admirable address delivered by Mr. Grigg at the recent Convocation of the Madras University. It would be well to have it read at one of the meetings of your Union as well as to discuss the various points it touches upon ...

"Let me finally, as a last charge from a parting friend, very strongly place before you the duty of interesting yourselves in the welfare and contributing towards the support of the local Caste Girls' School.

For forty years the Ernakulam Literary Union lived, and when it lived, it did glorious work. It was my proud privilege to tend it, to develop it, and to see it grow from mere to more in strength and usefulness. Whenever there was any trouble, the members came to me. Here is a letter to me, dated 21-10-1916, from Mr. P. Raman Menon, one of the Secretaries of the Union.

"It is admitted on all hands that you are, so to speak, the father of the E. L. Union. We have to do something to improve matters relating to the Union. I humbly request you to kindly guide us by your timely and valuable advice. I know, as a matter of fact, that you are ever busy with your work as a lawyer and as the Secretary to many associations and committees. We will work; you have only to remain on the committee lending weight to what we might do."

Once, when Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, the Chief Judge, was the President, there was a great stir over some matter. When he found that it was getting complicated, he wrote to me to intervene and to put it right. "Kindly peruse the enclosed papers over an affair of the Ernakulam Literary Union, and let me know whether it is not within your power to pour oil on troubled waters."

Once alone, a new member, in the excitement of

perverted enthusiasm, characterised me as a man of words. There was an uproar, and he was forced by the members to clear out. That was one morning. He wrote to me in the evening of the same day a letter of apology. "I regret for all the unpleasant commotion caused by me in the Union to-day. While one and all the members have been convinced that the Union would long before have come down but for your service as its backbone from its origin up to date, it is an inconceivable mistake on my part to have caused such a sad occurrence. I expressly request you to pardon a penitent sinner and do your best as before for the welfare of the Union." But the matter did not rest there. At the next meeting of the society, Mr. Sankara Menon, one of the vice-presidents proposed and the other vice-president, Mr. Rajarama Rao, seconded, "that the member should withdraw his words and apologise to Mr. Krishna Menon as they do not echo the view of any other member."

The Union celebrated its Silver Jubilee on the 5th of October 1913. It had a continuous career of very fruitful work till it was forced to wind up its affairs by the unsympathetic attitude towards it of two or three individuals. When Mr. S. K. Subramania Iyer became the Principal of the Mahara's College, he thought, mistakenly I must say, that this Union stood in the way of the growth of College societies. Therefore he wished to see the Union dissolved. At the meeting, held on 32-11-1098 (16-7-1923), under the chairmanship of Mr. A. Sankara Menon, to consider the question, I found no students. That fact broke my heart. It was I thought a pity that there was not one student bold enough to espouse the cause of the society. But I shall not forget the defence put up by Mr. A. Velayudha Menon, advocate, for the continuance of the Union and the withering reply he gave to Dr. A. Krishna Menon, his brother-in-law, who was in consonance with the views held by his

friend, Mr. Subramaniya Iyer. I could have easily thwarted their attempt if I so wanted it. But when I found the students slavishly following their master, I was only keen on giving the Union a decent burial, and, on a fitting distribution of its assets among deserving institutions. The library and the articles of furniture were distributed among the Girls' High School, the later growth of the original Caste Girls' School, the Scout Association, the Ernakulam High School and the Ladies' Association. I have with me a copy of the minutes of that meeting, as also a printed copy of the rules, as revised by a Committee, constituted by that meeting, consisting of Messrs. S. K. Subramania Iyer, C. S. Gopala Panikkar, Parakkal Krishna Menon and myself, for the future conduct of the E. L. Union which was the thereafter to be called "The Ernakulam Literary and Public Welfare Union." I left it there to be nursed by those who wrecked the Literary Union.

I shall resume the narration of my humble life-history. After my examination, my brother took me to Madras where my Master, himself and others went to attend the third Indian National Congress. It was a happy time for me, and I was truly grateful to my brother for that trip which I enjoyed and by which I was very much benefitted. When the results were out, it was found that I stood first from here with a first class. Raman wrote to me, "You stand first in Malayalam, so our Namputhiripad says." In the Fifth Comparative, and in F. A., and B. A., too I topped the list in this subject and secured the Kunjhampuzha Nampiar Prize in the Essay Competition from the Presidency College. For these I am indebted to the training I had at the feet of Namputhiripad.

H. H. Ravi Varma was the first to congratulate me on my success.

Tripconithura, 12th Feb., 1888.

My dear Kunji Krishnan,

I take a great pleasure in congratulating you on your success in the examination.

I wish to see you soon taking the leading part in the great struggle which we shall have to fight and win in doing good to our country. I am not able to express all that I have in my mind. I shall leave them to time. Suffice it to say that the future welfare of our country is dependent upon her noble and well educated young men like you.

Ever praying the Providence to give us strength and vigour to attain that end.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) Ravi Varma."

Others also followed somewhat in the same strain. I shall quote a few sentences from my brother's letters. After 'congratulating' me on my 'creditable success,' he asked me whether I was likely to get a scholarship and, then, added that my prize books might be either reference books or some that would stand in good stead during my further studies.

"I have no doubt that if you will persevere in your studies without neglecting your health, the resuscitation of the western Thottakadat will redound to your glory. We are trying our utmost to fight out our battle in life successfully against fearful odds, and God willing we shall be able to leave the work of regeneration of the country in a fairly advanced stage in the hands of the rising generation of our country. What some of us surely feel is the total absence of union and a spirit of earnest co-operation among the members of the Reform Association. If you of the students' association, (that was the original name of the Literary Union) whom we expect to

supply us with reinforcements, will try to create that among you, which we feel wanting in us, the works of regeneration and reform will soon pass the bounds of utopia, dreamy speculation or the phantasmagoria of excited imagination, and enter the field of practical reality. Work on then, in the spirit in which you have begun, and the self-satisfaction of having done your duty, nay, the gratitude of the nation shall be your reward."

I did get a scholarship; but, as for books, they were, as was apprehended, gaudy, costly books which were of no use to me. The two sumptuous volumes of *The Stately Homes of England*, beautifully bound they were, I gave to the Literary Union Library, while I kept the other volumes with me for a time to be read and then given away as the others.

III. My College days.

(This chapter I wrote for the College Magazine. I reproduce it here to avoid the trouble of writing the whole afresh.)

I. My College days in Ernakulam.

I owe an apology to my friend, Mr. Ramakrishna Iyer, the talented and energetic Editor of the College Magazine, for not responding earlier to his request for an article on my Ernakulam College Days. I am sure he will not attribute the delay to any want of enthusiasm on my part for the cause of our College Magazine. He can realise, more or less, the exacting nature of the work of a practising lawyer who has ever to swim lest he should drown or be left behind. If, in addition to this, a Vakil has to work on Committees and to attend to other duties of a public and philanthropic nature, where could he find time to dream of his college days? We have been friends for several years. After his retirement, he went back to his village near Palghat, and engaged himself in rural welfare work. When, in 1940, he came to Ernakulam, he visited me. "1940-10-4. Old Prop. R. K. Iyer visited me. He spoke of his village uplift work. On parting he said, 'You look

the same old self, Krishna Menon. No change. You have earned a right to rest after a noble, self-sacrificing career. Still the public and the Govt. make you work ; not their fault. It is difficult in these days to get a calm, sane man with the varied experience you have got." I thanked him for his remarks. He has invited me to his village."

My college days; they were happy. And, if some good fairy will allow me to re-live any period of my past, I shall certainly vote for my college days, when amidst pleasant and invigorating environments, I was able, without that killing worry, to devote my time and attention to congenial pursuits. My teachers, in no small degree, contributed to make my college days happy. Like a true Indian, therefore, let me begin this part of my life by paying my humble but heartfelt tribute of gratitude to them; and, during the worship of my masters, I shall recount a few of the reminiscences of my college days.

I was in the Ernakulam College, from 1889 to 1890. Then Mr. Alfred Forbes Sealy, M. A., was the Principal of the College. To be more accurate, I should say the Head Master; for, Mr. Sealy always liked to be called a Head Master, and was not very favourably inclined, so the rumour ran, to the raising of the High School to the status of a College.

Mr. Sealy belonged to an old Gloucestershire family. He was the third and youngest son of General William Dowden Sealy. His early days were spent near Clifton; and, after a public school education, he went up to Cambridge and entered Caius College from where he took his degree. Being possessed of an independent income, he remained at Cambridge for some years and specialised in Entomology and some other branches of science. He had a fine collection of British moths and butterflies and of birds' eggs which he gave to his college museum. He took a deep interest in all evangelical movements, and soon gathered together a large class of boys for religious and secular instruction.



Mr. and Mrs. T. K. Krishna Menon.



Mr. T. Govinda Menon.

His tutor at Cambridge was the late Bishop Gell of Madras. It was at his request that Mr. Sealy first came to India. In the January of 1865, Mr. Sealy was appointed as the Head Master of the Ernakulam High School. When he retired, he was the Principal of the Ernakulam College and Director of Public Instruction in the Cochin State. He laid the foundation of a systematic English Education in Cochin. He laid it deep and secure; and today we are reaping the benefits of his forethought and workmanship. On a historic occasion, a competent critic publicly declared from the Ernakulam College Hall that he was not using the language of idle adulation when he said that Mr. Sealy's work had really entitled him to be called the Arnold of Southern India. As the Principal of the local college and as the Director of Public Instruction he served this country long and well. To this students he was ever a friend, philosopher and guide. To improve their minds, morals, and their bodies,

"He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,

Allured them to brighter worlds and led the way."

Mr. Sealy was a great man. There was nothing of the sneak or snob about him. He had the patent of nobility about him, and to know him intimately, well, that was a liberal education in itself. His dominant notes were earnestness, discipline and neatness. He was a man of high moral character, and of abstemious habits, and was exceptionally thorough and neat in whatever he did. He was a God-fearing man and no matter what the theme might be, he infused into it the spirit of a religious preacher. He loved the High School, and it gave him back of its best.

He lived in British Cochin. It was a sight to see him daily coming from the landing-place to the college surrounded by scores of students of all ages, invested

with the charm of his smiling personality. The little ones used to be his favourites; he would permit them even to take liberties with him.

If any of the boys was unwell, he would look into the case himself. For all the common, minor ailments with which the students were likely to be affected, he had medicines with him, and gave them free to the patients. To poor, deserving pupils his purse was open; and, for their books and fees, they used to freely indent on it. But, in cases of discipline, he was a martinet. Then he would "steel his heart against all tugs of pity."

He encouraged manly sports, and himself took part in boating and swimming. He was an excellent helmsman; and he took a delight in crossing the risky lagoon that lies between Ernakulam and Cochin in a squall when even doughty, professional boatmen dared not to tempt it. He always appeared young and "carried sunshine and the breadth of flowers" about him. He was an advocate of the Indian foot-ball. It used to be played on the open space that existed between the Public Library and the College building. At that time, the best players of our college were my classmates, Messrs. N. Sankara Menon and O. K. Harihara Iyer. They held their own even against players from outside. Then the Indian foot-ball and boating were the favourite sports among grown up students. It is a pity that students do not now patronise these as in the good days of old. There was then no English foot-ball, nor the College owned any tennis or badminton court. I played tennis at the palace where H. H. Ravi Varma resided, and badminton at the late Mr. P. Sankunni Menon's place. Mr. Sankunni Menon was the Tahsildar-Magistrate of Kanayannoor, and afterwards rose to the position of Dewan Peishkar and District Magistrate. Occasionally, I played foot-ball in the compound attached to the house where Mr. Kengoth Ravunni Menon lived. I loved boating and

had a pull at the oars now and again. Almost every day a few of us went out for a walk. I enjoyed these constitutionals immensely. During these rambles, we discussed subjects, grave and gay.

Mr. Sealy took us in Tennyson and Physiology. Tennyson was his favourite poet, and he knew many parts of that great poet's works by heart. He never confined himself to the text books. He aimed at the general culture of the students, and his talk flitted through science and history, life, art and poetry. He had a swift, gracefully modulated speech. Mr. Sealy's students were well-known for their high attainments, and for neatness of execution, and were pointed out as models of what students should be.

That splendid edifice in which the college hall and library are now housed was designed by Mr. Sealy and built under his personal supervision, and that of Dewan Sankunni Menon. It will serve as a visible, enduring monument to my respected master, who dedicated his life to the cause of education and to the service of his Lord. He died at the close of June 1908.

Mr. Duncan Mearns Cruickshank, M. A., was our Vice-Principal. His career as a student was brilliant as is testified to by his teachers and by those under whom he worked. He had also the make of a master in him.

From the Aberdeen Grammar School, he went to the King's College of the Aberdeen University. He distinguished himself particularly in Mathematics, Classics and Moral Philosophy. Mr. R. A. Gray certifies that Mr. Cruickshank attended the Public Mathematical School at Aberdeen and studied Natural Philosophy and Mathematics under him, and that he obtained among the highest prizes in his various

classes. Mr. Frederick Fuller, Professor of Mathematics in the University of Aberdeen, tells us that Mr. Cruickshank passed the examination with great credit having been in the order of merit. He came out of his university "an accomplished and substantial scholar". On leaving the university, he was for some time engaged in teaching higher mathematics to the students of the Town School there. Then he became a master of the Parochial School of Kintor. He was, says the Professor of Divinity, "trained in teaching by his mother, who was celebrated as one of the very first teachers in Aberdeen. He has caught her enthusiasm and capability in this respect." "A most estimable young man and a valuable teacher", says one employer of his. "I have known him for many years. His moral character is unblemished. As a teacher he possesses qualifications of no ordinary description. He is an excellent scholar, and this, combined with a fine intelligence, makes him a most successful instructor of youth. Mr. Cruickshank is acquainted with the best methods of teaching. Above all, his heart is in the work, and he performs his duty with the greatest assiduity and devotedness," says another. I shall wind up his life in Britain with one more extract: "His instructions were always enforced by an energy and zeal which at once secured the attention of the pupils; and, by the information which he brought to bear on the lessons, he interested them in their work, and while he kept up a thorough discipline, he gained the affection of the pupils by his kindness."

In 1873, we find Mr. Cruickshank as the Head Master of the Municipal High School in British Cochin. In 1875, he was appointed to act for Mr. Sealy during his furlough to Europe. Even after the return of the latter, remarks Dewan Sankunni Menon, "Mr. Cruickshank's meritorious conduct while in charge induced the Sircar to retain his services permanently." The Dewan also refers to the opening of

the F. A. class and to the untiring devotion of Mr. Cruickshank to his duty. Subsequently, however, he had to leave Cochin to take up the inviting prospects of the Headmastership of the Pachaiyappa's High School of Madras. He raised it to the status of a Second Grade College. Creditable success accompanied him there too; so that the Trustees of the Pachaiyappa's charities were unwilling to permit him to return to a lucrative appointment in this State. The Trustees placed on record "their sense of the loss of his valuable services to Pachaiyappa's College whose success and popularity is mainly due to his conscientious and able discharge of his duties." The Trustees would have gladly arranged to retain his services if he had intimated his intention to resign their service before accepting an appointment under the Cochin Government. But it was considerations other than monetary that forced him in 1884 to come away to his old moorings, after an absence of about 6 years. Striking results of the Ernakulam College showed the care and zeal with which he worked for this institution. "I think" said Lord Curzon, "I shall not be far wrong in attributing these gratifying results in a large measure to the influence and teaching of your Principal, Mr. Cruickshank, for whom I understand the Durbar went all the way to Aberdeen. There is not much exterior resemblance between this land of perpetual summer, of the feathery palm and the land-locked lagoon, and the granite city of the Scottish coast; but character and grit appear to be capable of producing good results in the one as in the other."

After serving it for more than a quarter of a century, during 11 years of which he held the combined office of the Principal and Educational Secretary, he retired in January 1903 from the Cochin Educational Department. In reply to the address presented him on that occasion, he spoke as follows:— "My experience

of Ernakulam students, has always been that they are very much above the average students in intelligence and go. . . . I thank you very much for your kind reference to my connection with higher education in Cochin. Though I fear I cannot lay claim to anything like all the praise implied in what you state in your address, I can at least say that, in the Ernakulam College, I tried to do the best I could for my boys, and that I worked my hardest in their behalf. . . . I am very much touched by the kind way in which you speak of my settling down in Cochin. After being continuously in India from the end of 1870, and after being so long here, I thought I could not do better than settle down in the place where I had spent so many busy, happy years, and where I had experienced nothing but kindness. . . . Gentlemen, as I stand before you this evening at the close of my service, I cannot help thinking of the many and great changes that have taken place during its course. Looking back, for instance to the time when I first saw Ernakulam, and comparing the Ernakulam of the early seventies with the Ernakulam of today, I am necessarily struck with the great improvements that have taken place in every direction. At that time, the backwater washed the western side of the road, and was bordered with fishermen's huts. The present beautiful stretch of maidan had not come into existence. There was no steam-ferry, and those who had to make use of the old service of undermanned rowing boats found the journey westward always tedious and not seldom dangerous. The Police force was not organised. Of the public buildings that now face the backwater, the only one that then existed was the part of the college in which we are now assembled. Our fine public offices were not thought of. . . . And now we have the railway. What further changes, what additional progress, its advent has in store for us, who can say? But that these will

not be trifling we can safely anticipate; for I have somewhere read that the sound of the whistle of the Railway engine is productive of greater wonders than the most potent of the fabled spells of the ancient magicians." In 1908, in the 65th year of its sojourn here, his great soul passed away.

But I am afraid, I am anticipating events. Let me speak of him as our professor. He taught us *Julius Caesar* and *Quentin Durward* and a few poetical pieces. Professor Ward once said that to many an Indian an English Professor meant a white man in a black coat who dictated notes *verbatim* to be taken down *seriatim*; and he further added that some Professors did create and give colour to this impression. We thought that, when he was taking us through the drama, Mr. Cruickshank was working under some restraint, and that he was not letting himself go. So, one day, a few of us made up our minds to meet him one after-noon soon after his lunch. "What brings you all here? No idea of a raid, I suppose." He said with a smile. "Far from it. We came to represent a grievance." One of us replied him. "Grievance?" "By taking down the notes, we are not in a position to catch the spirit of the play or to enjoy its beauties." "It is not my fault; no. It is the fault of the university. Where is the time to do anything else?" In spite of his discouraging reply, we did find in after days that our mission had its desired effect. We went to him with trembling feet, for to oppose him was to break the tables of the law. He was a studious recluse and never liked to be disturbed by any one. No doubt, in the company of a select circle of those intimately known to him, he was a very good conversationalist, and could crack a joke or clink a glass just as well as if not better than any one else. Once, it seems, a doctor friend of his wanted to help him with soda to his glass of whiskey; he had a healthy longing for a foaming flagon; Mr. Cruickshank

turned to him and said with a mischievous twinkle: "Thank you, Doctor, but I have no faith in your *mistures*." With the boys of the F. A. classes also, at times, he would relax to some degree the severe formality of his demeanour. But, as a rule, he looked a bit stern, and as one who wasted nothing and lacked nothing. None the less, no one could gainsay that he was a great scholar, a good teacher and an ideal gentleman. He will always have one of the prominent places in the grateful hearts of all who had the benefit of his tuition. His severest reprimand to an erring student was only the simple remark, accompanied with the shake of his beard, "You will come to grief, Sir." On occasions, when he chanced to get through his allotted work for the day, he would shut his book and his note-book, and then would begin to talk to us on a variety of subjects. The depth and width of his knowledge was wonderful. Rarely, he would even treat us to riddles and charades. "You see Satan with a tail, in illustrations. Suppose he chanced to lose it, what will he do?"—he once asked us. Some looked up; others looked down; but answer made none. After some time, he said "He will go to one of the gin places in London where spirits are retailed." Then one of the students happened to whisper; "Why not to a local arrack-shop?" Mr. Cruickshank heard this. He gathered his books, turned to the student and remarked, "You have no sense of propriety, young man! The Prince of the Fallen Angels to go to an arrack shop! No sir; he must go to a palace, and that in the Metropolis of the British Empire.", shook his beard and cleared out of the room with a smile. He was an authority on English Grammar. He was one of Dr. Bain's favourite students, and it was a marvel to us to see him lending warmth and colour to the bleak rigidities of English etymology and syntax.

He had no faith in those constant examinations which then we had to undergo. Once he wrote to me

"We have been afflicted during the last fortnight with a school half-yearly examination, the why or the wherefore of which I have not succeeded in getting at. It is a terrible waste of time." On the question of forcing students to wear coat and cap he held decided views: "In this country the important question always is how little dress may a human being with decency wear." On a sunny day Sydney Smith once remarked that he would like to sit in his bones. Even in England, everything else in one's body appears to one on those days as irritating encumbrances. What is the fate of young students in India on hot days if they have to burden themselves with caps and coats! He was never impatient or hasty on matters which were distasteful to him. He possessed a philosophic frame of mind; and yet was human, and had a throbbing, feeling heart. A letter or two, from among the many that I was privileged to receive from him while I was in Madras, I shall transcribe here below to show the confidence he reposed in me and the interest he took in my studies.

Ernakulam, 11th April, 1891.

My dear Kunju Krishnan,

I received your kind letter a long time ago, and I ought to have answered it sooner. The weather here is dreadfully hot, and we are anxiously looking forward to our holidays. The High School is officially announced to close on the afternoon of Friday the 17th April, and to re-open on Monday the 1st June.

There is to be an entertainment this afternoon in School. A certain Brahman is to perform some wonderful feats of memory, and, in honour of the occasion, there is to be no school this afternoon — a good thing for those who have to teach in the afternoon.

The VIII class is small and not particularly brilliant. The VII class is large, and composed of a number of not very elegant extracts from all kinds of schools. The VI class is big and bad.

I hope you are getting on well. By the way, you will find a very good account of Bacon's style in Minto's *Manual of Prose Literature*. Before reading about Bacon, glance over the introductory chapter on composition.

I see the Government has sanctioned the survey of a line of railway between Palghat and Karupadanai. I hope the thing will go through and that in five years time there will be no more bone-breaking cart journeys to Shornur.

I am going up to Bangalore in a week or two. I leave this next Saturday evening, and hope to be in Bangalore on the following Tuesday morning.

I trust His Highness the Eighth Prince is in good health and getting on well. The weather in Madras, I should suppose, is as trying as it is here. His Highness the Twelfth Prince is attending lessons in the VII class.

I have absolutely no news to give you. Hoping this will find you well, and with kindest regards.

Yours very sincerely
(Sd). D. M. Cruickshank.

Ernakulam,

6th September, 1891.

"My dear Kunju Krishnan,

I was very happy to receive your two kind letters. I have been unable to answer them sooner, as I have been very busy and much worried lately, and have also been ill. We have been afflicted during the last fortnight with a school half-yearly examination, the

why or the wherefore of which I have not yet succeeded in getting at. I have had eight sets of papers to value and I am perfectly disgusted with the whole affair. It is a terrible waste of time for the examination classes. It will probably drag its slow length along for another week, then comes the Onam week, and then we are at an appreciable distance of the annual and university examinations. I doubt whether I shall be able to finish my work. Four weeks lost—that is a very considerable slice out of our time. My anticipations, as far as the eighth class is concerned, are very gloomy. We shall, I think, be fortunate if we pass any.

Mr. Sealy's speech at the distribution of prizes contained many things. His denunciation of higher education was most amusing. Because Cochin is a small State, so at least I understood him to say, therefore it was ridiculous for it to think of embarking in higher education. He implied also that the present standard is too high. He said that education is dearer at home than in India. This, I doubt, at any rate as far as Scotland is concerned. And so on, and so on he went, for a long half hour. But it is all over now, and cannot happen again at least for another year.

Our new Mathematical master, Mr. Subramania Sastri, seems to be a very nice man, and a good and capable teacher. I am very glad we have got one so competent to succeed to the place.

By the way, I have been reading a very excellent book lately. I don't know whether you would like it. It is Earle's *English Prose, Elements, History and Usage*. If it is in your library; it would do you no harm to have a look at the earlier chapters. You ask me in your first letter about Mill's *Liberty*. I once read the book long ago, remember absolutely nothing about it. Mill is not one of my favourites.

You speak of Mr. Sealy's resignation. There are many rumours, but nothing definite. I shall believe

he intends going when I see his resignation in the Gazette.

I was glad to see that the Senate would have nothing to say to a special dress for students. In this country, the important question always is, how little dress may a human being with decency wear? Who is to be the full-time Registrar? Will the coming man be Mr. Smith or Mr. Adam or Mr. Barrow?

Considering who the writer is, this is a pretty long letter, so I must finish. By the way, what Grammar, and what English Composition are in use in the Presidency College for the Seventh class?

With kindest regards,

I am,

Yours very sincerely,

(Sd) D. M. Cruickshank.

Mr. and Mrs. Cruickshank were always very kind to me. I shall never forget them. At the yearly meeting of the Old Boys' Association in 1935, Mr. A. Sankara Menon and myself had a resolution passed and a Committee formed to collect funds for the annual award of a medal or prize, in the name of Mr. Cruickshank, to the first student in English in the Intermediate class. We two worked for it. H. H. Ravi Varma, the sub-Judge Prince, who was the Chairman of the committee, was also enthusiastic about it. On 26-6-1937, we held the last meeting of the committee, and dissolved it, after settling the conditions of the award and the delivery of the money to the Government.

Mr. Subramania Iyer was our Professor of Mathematics. He was a lean, weak man with some trouble in his heart. But when once he warmed himself into the subject, he forgot himself and looked as if he were made of adamant. He adored his subject, and was enthusiastic in imparting his knowledge to his pupils. "The dullest boy in the class is my

ideal student." he used to say; and he felt happy when light crept into the crevices of that boys' cranium. He punctuated his sentences with the word 'yes'. If any inattentive boy, to show that he was grasping the intricacies of a difficult problem, were to repeat the word, the Professor would pounce upon him and ask him to explain the point he was trying to impress on the students. When he did fail, as he must, Mr. Subramanya Iyer would tell him with a withering look of sarcasm, "My 'yes' is the affirmative particle 'yes', whereas yours is the letter 's'." He lived and died for his favourite subject and his students.

"The men of old were men in forms of greatness moulded."

Next to Mr. Subramania Iyer came Mr. Koshi. I used to wonder at the irony of fate which made Mr. Koshi teach Logic and Grammar in the F. A., classes. Not that he was illogical or had only a poor fund of the knowledge of syntax and prosody. But his cast of mind I thought never attuned itself to these subjects. He had a fund of humour with him. He took the changes and chances of life with perfect equanimity. "An amused smile always flickered round the corners of his mouth." And he had an inimitable way of expressing his thoughts in an easy graceful speech with 'the flow and caressing softness' of limpid water. In a combat of wit, he could be an easy first. On a 1st of April, a student left on the teacher's table a piece of paper with the words "April Fool" written on it. Before Mr. Koshi started his work, he saw this. With a smile he took it in his hand and said, "Some one has left his visiting card here. He can see me after this hour." But once he was floored by one of the students. To express his displeasure to one of the students who had not prepared this lesson, he asked him to name

the letters of the English alphabet. The boy, not to be beaten like that, fell down as if in a swoon. Mr. Koshi and the rest of the class were in a fix; they grew nervous. Cold water was brought and was sprinkled on his face. A few fanned him. Perfect stillness prevailed in the class-room. After a while, he quietly got up and sat down on the bench. "What was the matter with you?" asked Mr. Koshi. "I was unnerved by your difficult question," he gravely replied. The whole class burst into laughter; and Mr. Koshi laughed longest. He always dressed himself in spotless white. He had the air of a strayed fairy that took an amused interest in the affairs of the world.

Viewed through the mist of time, Mr. Mathen seems to drop unemotionally into his place of the Malayalam Munshi. I have never seen him in an emotional mood. Even when expounding a classic piece where some entrancing episode and the play of passions are expressed in words of haunting beauty and melody, he would remain without any sign of warmth, of agitation. And yet, in his day, he was a factor to be reckoned with. His advent into a class would always create some stir, set into motion several sources of activity. He was a perfect gentleman, with unostentatious habits. He knew his subject well. He made strenuous efforts to put his students well up in his subject. "Two M. As., and two B. As., teach, continuously teach. Students get ploughed in their subjects, but all pass in Malayalam."—it was broadly hinted that this formed part of his reveries on the announcement of results of the university tests. The late Mr. Garthwaite's Grammar was one of his strongholds. From behind it, he would deliver, with an unerring aim, death-dealing queries to those disciples who were inclined to be disobedient or boisterous. He treated me more as a friend than as a student. It was not so from the Matriculation class. As I was studying at Calicut before I joined that class, he regarded

me somewhat like an intruder. The awkwardness of the situation was aggravated when I began to ply him with disconcerting though relevant questions. One day, he sent me to the last place. I worked my way to the top bench. Again, he sent me down. When the third round came, I got furious. Very probably, the Pundit might have been right. Anyhow, I thought otherwise; I thought that the disgrace was not deserved; and there were many in the class who sympathised with me. So, as I was marching to the last place, I stopped in front of the teacher's desk, straightened myself up and told him, my body trembling with anger, "This will not fetch the first prize to your son." There was a slight twitter in the class which acted as a whip on poor Munshi. He wiped his eyes with his bent forefinger, and then told me that he would report me to Mr. Sealy. I was afraid of that step; the sorts of punishment which Mr. Sealy might inflict on me flitted across my vision. Consequently, to avoid going to Mr. Sealy, I had to take a bold but risky course. I told Munshi, "I shall be jolly glad if you do; for I too have a lot of things to tell Mr. Sealy about the way in which you teach us Malayalam." It was a stunner and had its effect. He directed me to write, by way of imposition, a few pages from our text which, as he relented, he soon after reduced to a few lines. With that the whole thing closed. I felt sorry for what I said. In the whole of my career as a student, this was the solitary instance in which I was a party to a scene. When I got a first class, the first place from here and the Government scholarship, he began to like me; and when he knew that I had at my disposal the services of a Sanskrit Pundit under whom I was learning Sanskrit, he began to treat me as a friend. I fully reciprocated his feelings, and we became good friends. I got him from my Pundit Mr. Madhava Kurup elaborate notes on some of the difficult pieces which he had to teach us for the F. A.

Examination. He was so pleased with them that he got them printed at his cost for the use of his students. He expressed a strong desire to hear Sriman Pothiyil Narayana Chakkyar's *Kuthu*. No wonder. For, that Chakkyar was a great man and an expert in his time. It was an art, the way he narrated the *prabandhams*. Over pathetic episodes he would make the eyes of the hearers wet with tears, and, at other times, the audience would roar with laughter over his witticisms. I used to be so entranced over his narration, that, even at the time of my Matriculation Examination, I never missed a day of his *Kuthu*. He was, when in Ernakulam, a constant visitor to my family residence. I arranged with some difficulty a way for my Munshi Master to hear the Chakkyar, whose story-telling powers Mr. Mathen admired immensely. I am acutely distressed over the decline and also deterioration of this institution.

Mr. Koshi once told me that our set was about the best he had in the F. A. class; and then added, smiling, "It is none the less mischievous." I am sure Mr. Koshi will be the first to admit that our pranks were of a very harmless kind. Sir Ramunni Menon, M. A., (Cantab), for six years the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University, Mr. K. Chandy, B.A., the first Councillor of the Mysore State, Mr. M. A. Chakko, the Superintendent of Police in Cochin, Mr. M. I. Virkki, B. A., the Comptroller of Accounts in Cochin, Mr. K. Jacob, B. A., B.L., a High Court Judge in the Travancore service, Dr. Periera, a Civil Surgeon in the British Service, Mr. Veigas of the British Excise Department and Mr. P. Krishna Menon, B. A., for long a President of the Ernakulam Town Council, Mr. M. P. Anthony, the Port Officer at Narakkal,—these were a few of my class-mates. These have amply fulfilled the promises of their youth. We had the unique privilege of having, for the first time in the annals of our College, a Prince of Cochin as one of

our class-mates. He was His Highness Ravi Varma, a brother of the late Elaya Raja of Cochin. If I may presume to say so, His Highness was a model student, and 'lived laborious days'. Every inch he was a gentleman, and comported himself with princely dignity. He was always accessible to his fellow-students; but he would suffer no levity. We all treated him with sincere respect, and his genial presence acted as a sort of tonic on us. I had the inestimable benefit of moving closely with the Prince, as I was selected to study with His Highness in the F. A. class. To me it was a very interesting and advantageous experience. His Highness' generous nature was evinced even earlier in a letter which I received on 23-3-1888. "In appreciation of the warm interest you have always evinced in the education of Princes in general, and of me in particular, by the cordial assistance rendered to me in the shape of notes and other guidances, it was that I presented you the books (*Treasury of British Eloquence* and *Bright's speeches*). Your good conduct, literary requirements and turn of mind have had a good deal to do in the choice of books." Wherever I be, whatever course pursue, I shall always carry with me the most pleasant and grateful memory of those days. And if His Highness chance to read these lines, let me assure him, if assurance were needed, that the same feelings of profound gratitude and regard are still mine towards His Highness.

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The Ernakulam Literary Union was one of the attractions of our College days. Then there were no similar societies in the College or in the High School here. Students took an active interest in the activities of the Union. Members came prepared with the subjects for the day; and they spoke on them fluently and with good sense. Occasionally, there would be bickerings; then there would be speeches of erimination

and recrimination. But these only added to the liveliness of the proceedings; for there was a *bon-homie* about them all; and they left no bad mark behind them.

As I started the Union, it cheers my heart to realise that it existed for a very long time, and did good, substantial service to the successive batches of its members. We learn a foreign language. In every walk of life, more or less, facility in speaking and writing that and our vernacular is absolutely necessary. And what better training ground could we have for its acquisition than these debating societies? During the first sittings of the Indian National Congress at Madras, I had the happiness of hearing that great Tribune of the people, Babu Surendranath Banerjee. I was charmed by his eloquence. I got down his speeches and read them with avidity. A desire to become a good public speaker caught hold of me, and, in the middle of 1889, I wrote to him for hints in the art of oratory. I reproduce a part of his reply in the hope that it will be of use to my young friends:—

"I feel considerable difficulty in complying with the request which your letter contains. Oratory is really an incommunicable art. At any rate I do not possess the divine secret of introducing you into its mysteries, except that I would venture to point out that it is more a matter of the heart than of the head, and that deep sensibility is one of the fundamental characteristics of the true orator. The feelings have to be cultivated; the character has to be ennobled; the mind has to be stocked with fine images and lofty conceptions. I would ask you to read Renan's *Life of Jesus Christ*, Ameer Ali's *Life of Mahomed*, Mazzini's *Auto-biography*, Lecky's *Leaders of Irish Opinion*, Sullivan's *New Ireland*, Bright's *Speeches* etc. Further it would be desirable to cultivate the art of public speaking in debating societies which, in the language of Macaulay, are the nurseries of young orators."

In our days, there was once a large meeting. It was organised by the students. It was not held to condole with any body. I am sure it was convened to congratulate some one. I cannot remember whom. But that is not a relevant point for the present. Over some minor matter, there was a difference of opinion, which ended in an open split. Students were ranged on two sides. Leaders on my side were called Compass, Jerko and Goldbrand the Giant, which represented myself, K. Chandy, and P. Appa Menon respectively. I do not remember how we named the leaders of the opposing party. We circulated a journal containing satires, and parodies of the speeches of our antagonists. They retaliated on us by starting another in which they poured forth their vials of light raillery against us. This manuscript warfare went on for a short time when, of course, we shook hands and closed the ranks. But when it went on, Oh! there was tremendous fun.

There was another meeting—this was a private one—of a few students, held to protest against the enhancement of school-fees. We submitted a memorial to His Highness the Maharaja on this subject. There we showed that, in Trivandrum, with a First Grade College and a Law College, only 34 per cent of the cost of maintenance was realised from school-fees, whereas here, with only a Second Grade College, 47 per cent was being collected even before the proposed increase. We proved, at least to our satisfaction, that the contemplated step was detrimental to the cause of education in Cochin. We, therefore, prayed that the fees might not be increased, or, at least, to bring the new scale into force only at a future date. Messrs. N. Sankara Menon C. K. Hariharan Iyer, Palliyil Krishna Menon and myself went to Cochin to procure signatures for our memorial. The merchants whom we first approached were disposed to show us discourteously to the door on the pretext that

they had nothing to do with the matter. But when we reminded them that it was likely to affect their sons and their grand-children, they rallied round our cause. My diary notes that we had to walk exposed to the sun, and that "It was 4 p. m., when I took my meals. Read Homer's *Odyssey* in the evening." After the tiring troubles of the day, what a relief it must have been to read Homer. We got 400 signatures from Cochin. But my trials did not end with that. I had to go to Trichur all alone. I scoured 553 signatures from there. The memorial was signed by persons from all the Taluqs. Messrs. Nallanath Narayana Menon and K. P. Padmanabha Menon helped us with their advice; and Prince Ravi Varma wrote to me from Tripoonithura, "How I wish I were at Ernakulam to cheer you and encourage you in your laudable undertaking. Men do not always meet with success at first. . . . But by perseverance and zeal they gain their end. So let us gird up our loins and persevere until we gain our object. Write to me all about the memorial in detail in your next which, I hope, you will send per bearer." H. H. told Ramakrishna Pillay that the Literary Union should pay part of the expenses. But I had to meet them from my scholarship money. Not only that, not one of them who promised to go with me to the northern parts turned up when the time came; and I was called back by wire, "Your presence needed. Memorial affair. Start today only—Ramakrishnan.", and so had to go back again to complete the work.

The causes for which I worked so earnestly was just, and so I had the hearty support of elderly patriots and of influential newspapers. Our memorial to H. H. the Maharaja bristled with facts and figures which none could controvert. The *Western Star* had a long and strong leader on the subject in its issue of March 1 of 1890.

"There is neither sense nor reason in the revised scale adopted. The thing has been done simply to

satisfy the Resident. The Resident expressed in plain terms that "the fees of the *higher classes* should be yet further raised". The Government of Madras, in its review on the Administration Report on Cochin for 1063, remarked that the advice of the Resident should be attended to. The Madras Government also pointed out that, in the race for progress of education, Cochin is far behind Travancore, and that the comparison would bring home to the authorities the great need for earnestly bestirring themselves to effect improvement. Surely, they have done so in one respect - and that is in the introduction of higher rates of school-fees." . . . "The memorialists complain that: (1) in the F. A. classes the fees have been raised from 3 to 4 Rs., while in Travancore and Pudukota they are respectively Rs. 2-8 and Rs. 2; (2) in the Matriculation class from 2 to 3 Rs. 1, while in the other two States they are Rs. 2 and Rs. 1-12 as, respectively; (3) in the 5th class - from 1-8 to 2-8; in Travancore it is Rs. 2 and in Pudukota 1-8 only. Similarly in classes 4 to 1.

"It will be found from the above that the school-fees have not only been raised in the higher classes but with more rigour in the lower classes also." And then the paper rightly asks if that was the way to work the improvement, and whether the State authorities have correctly understood the hint thrown out by the Government. Again, the total expenditure on education during 1063 was proportionately much less in Cochin than in Travancore. The memorialists further state that in the Trivandrum College, which teaches for the B. A., and B. L., examinations, with the High School Department, the amount realised in the shape of fees is Rs. 34 on an average expenditure of Rs. 100, while here in the Ernakulam College which teaches only to the F. A. standard, the amount realizable according to the revised scale would be Rs. 47. We hope His Highness the Maharaja

will carefully consider the several points set forth in the memorial and issue the necessary orders for suspending the operation of the revised scale of school fees recently sanctioned by him."

Some days after the appearance of the above leader, a valued correspondent wrote for its columns an article on the fee memorial. It was then known that the writer was no other than that great jurist Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon. I shall quote a few sentences from that also.

"We are surprised to hear that no reply has yet been vouchsafed to the memorialists who represented their grievances to their Sovereign in a constitutional yet humble and respectful way. An analysis of the names of the signatories, and the various localities from which they come would make it clear that the memorial is not the product of interested wire-pulling of well-concerted party men.... Almost all the Taluks have contributed to swell the chorus.—Viewed in another aspect, I am indeed struck with the representation of the wealth, intelligence and influence of the signatories of the memorial. In a State where the Sovereign has not the benefit of the advice of council or clergy, it is of the greatest importance that constitutional representations proceeding from men of light and learning should be attended to with the utmost respect and scrupulousness. It is impossible to commend the policy which seems to have dictated the recent order with regard to the enhancement of school fees. If the Dewan of the State is not allowed any liberty of action, if he is to sink his own individuality in that of the British Representative, then it is time enough to rid of the State of the encumbrance of a so-called Minister. But fortunately things have not come to such a pass."

In this work I was not at all prompted by selfish considerations. For I was holding a scholarship, and this enhancement would not have affected me. It

was out of this scholarship that I even met a part of the expenses incidental to this work. I was given a free hand in the use of this money, and I find from the entries in my personal accounts at the end of the diaries that I have used it to good purposes. For floods in Bengal, donations to schools and reading rooms, contributions to help poor students, distribution of the rice during the hard days in Karkitagam—for all these I have spent out of this to the great delight of my mother.

After this work was over, I was asked by my dear, departed brother, Mr. T. Govindankutty Menon, to join the Hindu Sabha preachers who were itinerating in the State to collect funds for the Native High School at Trichur. My brother was a moving spirit of that Sabha; and, moreover, my heart was in the movement; so my brother's behest was gladly welcomed by me. The only thing that I disliked in that mission was the need I had to make speeches. I had to appeal for funds and to talk on religious topics. On a Sivaratthri day, we were on the Alwaya sandbank. After worship in that famous temple, we started *Bhajana*. Then there was an open-air meeting. I spoke on the origin of the Sivaratthri, the necessity for celebrating it in the scheme of the Hindu religion, the need of religion for man and on the then growing spirit of irreligion among the educated men in the two sister States, and wound up my remarks with a fervent prayer to the public not to copy them in that. I believe my brother wanted to give me a training in public speaking; but it told on my nerves. Not even the flattering unction of Mr. Guruswami Sarma, the Secretary of the Sabha, could stimulate me to experiment in platform oratory.

This experience tided me on one occasion over a difficult situation. My friend Rama Menon and myself were invited by a Christian friend of ours for a prize distribution in an Aided School at Ollur, of

which, I believe, he was the Manager. Mr. A. Sankaraiiah, the Diwan Peishkar, the notice announced, had kindly consented to preside at the function. Long after the appointed time, he did not turn up. The audience grew impatient. The school authorities strained their eyes to see if he was coming, and then their ears to catch the distant rumbling of his carriage.

I told Mr. Rama Menon, of course as a joke, that I would propose him to the chair. I am afraid he took me seriously and, perhaps, to avoid that predicament, he got up and, in a neat little speech, solemnly proposed me to the chair. Those present were anxious to return home, and so they applauded my friend's idea, without examining the propriety of the procedure. Consequently, an ill-clad student was installed on a chair which, on that day, should have been graced by the Diwan Peishkar and District Magistrate of Cochin. Soon after I occupied the chair, Mr. A. P. Subramania Iyer and Rev. Doyle came in. I appealed to both of them to take my place. They said that I too should learn to do those things. I distributed the prizes, in the proper form I thought; but, when the time to make a speech came, I could hear the rapid beating of my heart as if a cannonading was going on in my ears. Anyhow, I had to face the fire. For a minute or two I was fully conscious; then I did not know what words were uttered by me, what points were adverted to. The audience behaved to me in a very generous fashion. As I was concluding my remarks, Mr. Sankaraiiah walked in with a majestic but somewhat offended air; he was silently shown to a chair by the Manager. When I sat down, Mr. Subramania Iyer came up to me, vehemently shook my hands and said, "Excellent". But I was looking at the face of Mr. Rama Menon, and as I found it heaving with a smile of satisfaction, then and only then I felt happy. To Mr. Sankaraiiah's question

"Who is he?", in Tamil, to Mr. Subramania Iyer, he replied, "Our Firebrand Govindu's brother." And this answer takes me to my brother and his drama *Firebrand*.

* * * * *

My brother, Mr. Govinda Menon, passed his Matriculation from the Ernakulam High School. As it was not a College then, he had to go to the Provincial College at Calicut. One reason that gravitated him to that place was the presence of his most intimate friend Mr. Narayana Marar, who subsequently adorned the highest Court of Cochin. These two were life-long friends. In 1876, my brother passed his F. A., and went to the Engineering College. Mr. Barrow's certificate is now lying before me. It says:—"I always found him a well-behaved and diligent student, and I have little doubt of his sustaining the good character he always bore with us." In his 20th year, after a three years' course in the Engineering College, he joined the Cochin Service as an Overseer of the Public Works Department. He became a Supervisor. During the regime of Sir Rajagopala Chari, who had a high opinion of my brother, he was placed in charge of the Department as the Acting Chief Engineer for six months. At the end of the period, the Dewan spoke in eulogistic terms about my brother's administration of that Department.

He was strong in English and Mathematics. In my holidays, I always lived with him; and then many a tough problem in Trigonometry he elucidated for me. His beautiful residence at Trichur, which I named Lily Lodge, was very close to the Public Library. I doubt whether there was any good book in that Library which he had not read. In his home-breaking cart-journeys even over roads where mud formed the connecting-links of ruts with pits, he pored over his favourite volumes.

He was a challenging figure in his day. There were no half-tones in his equipment. "Everything was broad as day, indisputable as the multiplication table, and emphatic as the thunders of Sinai." When he was on the war-path, you could hear the strident tread and the swing of the tomahawk. He loved his country with a romantic enthusiasm, and worked for it with a zeal which was indifferent to all consequences.

Firebrand is a political drama written by him. The *dramatic personae* were men who held high positions in the service or in their profession. It is, so to say, a clever adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. The individuality of the modern poet is visible in *Firebrand*. The work created quite a sensation when it appeared in the *Western Star*. As the authorship had necessarily to be kept a secret, I had every week to take each instalment of the play to Mr. H. M. Brown, the genial and scholarly editor of the *Star*, who subsequently became the Excise Commissioner of Cochin. *Firebrand* had a bracing and beneficial effect on the social and the political atmosphere of the time. But it cost the author many a preferment.

Once his downrightness of expression was about to cost him his friendship with Mr. Nallanar Narayana Menon. Over some matter connected with the Victoria Jubilee Girls' School at Trichur, there was a slight rupture between the two; certain persons tried to widen the breach, so as to break the compact that existed among Messrs. K. Narayana Marar, K. P. Padmanabha Menon, Palliyil Gopala Menon and these two. I heard this; and at once wrote to Narayana Menon to let him know the turn the events were taking. I told him that the elders were presenting not an edifying spectacle to us, their juniors. When the letter was out of my hands, I felt that a boy had no business to interfere in those matters, and that my youthful enthusiasm had bubbled over the brim only to run to waste, or to meet with a rebuke. To my

agreeable surprise, it turned out to be otherwise. "Your letter" he replied "is quite characteristic of your excellent self. Nothing can affect the friendship that exists between my everdear Govindu and myself. You have already made the best impression on me by your good behaviour and conduct. Every syllable of what you say I approve. I shall see you and have a long chat with you." We had a talk, and the breach was effectively bridged. I knew that each was fighting for a principle and, from the very nature of things, they could only agree to differ. But my point was that there was no necessity for differences of opinion terminating in disgust. My brother, as a member of the School Committee, wanted to Indianise the syllabus of studies; whereas, Mr. Nanyana Menon was for a middle course, as he feared, and rightly too, that the Durbar would consider my brother's system as chimerical. Consequently, my brother thought it proper to resign his membership and to start a Girls' School of his own. Immediately after, when I went to him for help to start a Girls' School - not on his nationalistic lines - at Ernakulam, he said he would give me only one rupee; and I declined to receive it.

But I am not prepared to say that my brother was wrong in his condemnation of the system of female education that obtains in modern schools. A year or two ago, I chanced to read a book on the subject written by a member of the Servants of India Society. There he has gone into the subject in a thorough and systematic manner. He has come to the conclusion that the syllabus of studies adopted in the boys' schools is not to be fully applied to the schools for girls, but that these should be trained in those subjects that will enable them to take their natural place in their homes as wives and mothers.

Love is an incident in a man's life. That is all. But it is 'a woman's whole existence'. A girl's studies should not be made to ignore this fact, and to stimulate

her to strain for pay and power. That will create a violent breach with the past in all domestic virtues. It may bring into being new capacities into play; but it will be done at the cost of suppressing more spontaneous ones. A woman should always try to develop her natural talents and home-keeping traits which constitute her unquestioned claim to the devotion of those whose peace and progress she above all others can make or mar.

Even with reference to the general education of the people, a writer in the *Nineteenth Century and After* (June 1934) has this criticism to offer: "Regarded as an instrument for giving the masses of the people efficient, haphazard education to make them discontented without affording them any sure means of bettering it, the English State system of education is superb."

But my brother did not go so far. He maintained that literacy even when allied with unemployment was to be preferred to ignorance with little or no means of livelihood. He worked hard to raise the standard of the Sircar School at Trichur and to start the Hindu High School there. Mr. A. P. Subramanya Iyer, while he was the Head Master of the former, wrote to me thus in a letter, dated 24-4-1964: "You have every reason to be partial to this school; for, I believe, that, but for the praiseworthy agitation headed by 'Fire-brand', the Trichur District School would still have remained the old—Third Standard School."

Though I appreciated my brother's motive, I agreed with Mr. Narayana Menon when he said that no good would result by knowingly breaking one's head against a rock. So, when Mr. Rama Menon wrote to me, in connection with the raising of the Jubilee Girls' School to the Standard of a Middle School, that "Everything depends on your exertions", I took the hint, and worked hard for the school in whose welfare my friend and myself took a keen interest.

I said that my brother's order to work for the Native High School was welcome to me. But not so welcome was his request to contribute articles to *Kerala Nandini*, a paper then started by himself and a few others. I believe Mr. Chathukutti Mannadiar, the great poet, had the editorial control of the weekly. I had to obey my brother; I had not the option to question why. So I wrote two articles on *Kathakali*, the Malabar drama. I knew that my views on it would not be relished by many; and that was one reason why I selected that subject. I wanted to stimulate discussion on it; and I gained my object. *Nandini* lived only for a short time. When it lived, it kept the poets in order; also it lightly touched on social topics. But I do not think that it took any sustained interest in politics. No doubt, when it wrote on matters political, as it often did, it took care to study those subjects, to view them from several standpoints, and then to express its own opinion about them in a clear and elegant way. It must be said to its credit that it never went in for personal abuse, or scurrilous, irresponsible criticism. And it also did not encourage the long-drawn-out rigmaroles in fine diction with an exuberance of oriental epithets of the superlative degree.

My reluctance to write to the paper arose not from any disregard to the cause of Malayalam Literature. Certainly not. For, it was when I was studying for the F. A. Examination that, with the help of one or two friends of mine, I rendered into Malayalam a book on the *Hints on the Training of Native Children* by the late Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, and a romance in English called *Chandrasekara*. For the readiness with which the Raja gave an unknown student leave to translate it, I am grateful to that great statesman. I am also bounden to His Highness Kerala Varma, the late Elaya Raja of Cochin, for financing the publication, and for introducing the work to the notice of

the public. No more learned Prince than he lived in recent times; none more patriotic or independent.

By temperament and training I had a liking for Malayalam Literature. At the time about which I now speak, my surroundings also were suitable for the development of that taste. There were constant meetings of literary men at the residence of Mr. Kundur Narayana Menon. I was privileged to attend these, especially when they drew together a charmed circle of culture and talent. The party of distinguished guests generally included Messrs. Kodungallur Kochunni Tampuran, Kunhu Kuttan Tampuran, Venmani Mahan, Kathulil Achyuta Menon and others. To their brilliant talk I listened with delight, and my mind gathered enlightenment from these brilliant stars of our literary firmament. At Trichur, there was Mr. Chathukutti Mannadhar with whom I moved on very friendly terms. He had a passion for our literature. It was a pleasure, singular in its kind, to hear him discourse on its beauties and its great possibilities. To have been able to live even for a short time in the enchanting presence of these great men, I consider it a blessing; and the benefit I have derived by my association with them has been lasting and immense.

No one of my class-mates, at any rate, none whom I knew well, advocated the *admirari* principle. We were a set of hero-worshippers.

"Be to my faults a little blind,

Be to my virtues a little kind."

So the distich goes. But we went beyond the sentiments conveyed by this couplet. We worshipped the greatness of our deities, and completely ignored their foibles.

There is no place for sermonising in these reminiscences, nor am I out to discuss any big question. I know that. But I cannot resist the temptation of

sounding a note of warning that there is no hope of a bright future for Cochin, so long as we learn only to scan the faults and failings of great men, delight in the composition and publication of ephemeral literature, and go to worship in the temple with a half-smoked cigarette and a shirt fully soaked with the sweat of the tennis-court or of the foot-ball field. That is not the proper attitude for the worship of God or of greatness. To admire the Himalayan mountains, we do not begin to disparage the rotten twigs or the broken crags at its bottom. If we want to scale the heights which our heroes have climbed, we must admire them, imitate them. Again, 'the prayer that moves and the prayer that nerves' comes only to him that has faith, humility and piety. 'For the rest, a devil's dance of damaged dieties—that is about the proper thing.' 'Life is but a little holding lent to do a mighty labour.' Let us make the best of it. There is no use of hating each other. Centuries ago, it was a Hindu sage who sang on the banks of the Ganges that,

"Not hate but love alone makes hate to cease;

This is the ever-lasting law of peace."

Let us live a life of love and service. Let us learn that it is a high prerogative to be a servant of the humblest worshipper of God. Plain living and noble thinking—that should be our aim. Then, we shall be great citizens; we shall then be able to relieve the slow pulsations of pain and to bring cheer to the deep solitude of desolate days; and then, we shall have a great Cochin of which her patriots may well feel proud.

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Let me go back to my humble story. We had a variety of subjects to study. Specialisation was not

even in the air then. A good number of books we had to study, in English and in Malayalam, histories of England and of Ancient Greece and Rome, Euclid, Algebra, Arithmetic and Trigonometry, Logic, and Physiology—these look startling. But our teachers treated us as human beings, not as machines made of steel. One never vied with the other in exalting his subject to the detriment of the rest. So we had ample time, and many of us utilised it, to read books other than text books, to solve problems in the subjects of the mathematical group, and to improve our general culture, and, above all, to play. I had the run of the Public Library, and could browse in it at leisure. Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon kindly gave me a note to good old Mr. Dias, the librarian, to enable me to have the benefit of that institution. Mr. Dias was a man of wide reading and of refined manners. He used to be my literary taster. During the intervals, we used to have pleasant talks on books and authors. Then, as now, I loved to read the lives of great men. Among poets, Tennyson was and still is my favourite poet. But, of course, I did not confine myself to lives and Tennyson's poems alone. I read the books that I liked more than once, and always took notes of what I should study and remember. A good dictionary and my note-book were always with me when I read what we called "Extra Books."

I had no mind for light reading. The number of novels that I have read is small. I do not know whether I am to envy or to pity the lot of those who can skim through novels, touching the surface only at essential points and ignoring those delineations of character and descriptions of beauties of nature, over which the authors must have spent a lot of time. The condition of the modern student, I understand, is deplorable. Let me quote the *London Times*: "Most boys leave a public school without the slightest idea of systematic reading however brilliant their capabilities

may be. It is not their fault. School hours are so much parcelled out between class work and games, with the weekly tale of compositions to be handed in at specified times, that there is no leisure for the boys to spend in an ambitious scheme of regular reading. This is inevitable. But much can be done to lessen the evil by the careful stimulation in private of youthful enthusiasm."

My plan of work was this: I got up at 4 A. M. and worked till 15' to 5 A. M. and walked for about half an hour. Then followed bath and worship in the temple. Again, I studied till 9-30 A. M. After that, I took my meals and went to the college. In the evening, I played or walked for about two hours. Then I bathed and worshipped in the temple. On my return from the temple, I had to chant prayers with the other young members of my family. Prayer was followed by reading which was kept on till 9 P. M. when I took my supper and went to bed. I tried to be systematic, and so this time-table was maintained with monotonous insistence. But twice, when illness overtook me, I had to bid adieu to my time-table.

I do not think I have ever been perfectly healthy. One disease or other has always dogged my steps. I have heard my mother telling some friendly visitors that, in my early days, I had consumed more medicine than food. Though not so bad at all times, sickness has been a constant companion of mine. Owing to my indifferent health, and for other reasons also, I never tried to read much at night and thus minimise my hours of sleep. Therefore, from the very beginning, I began to study systematically. Thus I found time to devote to general reading and to solve, on my account, problems in Euclid and Trigonometry. Frederic Harrison's *Choice of Books*, Macaulay's *Essays*, *English Men of Letters* series, and speeches of Bright and of Banerjee mainly claimed my attention under the former head. On the books we

read, Rama Menon and myself exchanged critical notes. I had to help him with Mr. Cruickshank's notes on several important and obscure parts of our English texts-books. Occasionally, we tried our apprentice hands at journalism. "By-the-bye, does the *Star* require a correspondent at Calicut? I would be one. I am tired of writing to the *Spectator*." So Rama Menon wrote to me once. I gave his name to the editor of the *Cochin Argus* whose son, Mr. Pereira, was a friend and classmate of mine. Owing to his pressing request, I had to write a few articles on the Administration Report of Cochin which came out as leaders in that paper.

My bright days were suddenly blasted towards the close of September, when I began to suffer from fever, indigestion and palpitation of the heart. Mr. Elamanna Govinda Menon, a clever physician and a relative of mine, at first treated me. He liked me very much and treated me as an intimate friend of him. But I became weaker day by day, so much so that Mr. M. Sankara Menon who came to see me, before he went on a short pilgrimage during the Christmas recess, said subsequently that he feared he would never meet me again. All were really upset, even my courageous brother. "I am really very sorry", he wrote, "to hear that you are laid up at this critical juncture; but I hope and fully trust that you will, by the grace of God, be fully convalescent within a short period. Write to me if you are short of funds to pay the doctor or for any other purpose, and I shall send you. You need not, nay you should not put to yourself to inconvenience on that score. Pray, let me know how you are; for, if you are not much better, I should like to come over, and see that you are under skilful treatment. Let not Valiya Govindan leave Ernakulam till you are all right."

Here is a note from my friend Rama Menon at about that time. It is from Chalappuram, Calicut,

and dated 27-10-1880. "I choose this opportunity, my dearest Aniyam, earliest as it is, to reply to your last letter. I need not tell you, as you are very well aware that it should, that your letter excited many unpleasant sensations. When and how did you get that cursed cough? And are you a little better now? If I remember right, I have told you more than once not to play at football. It suits only a more vigorous constitution than yours or mine . . . and as to your studies, I collect, from the amount of work you have turned out this year, that they must have been very hard, too hard."

This time too it was the kindness and solicitude of Dewan Govinda Menon that helped me. I cannot be too grateful to him for the several acts of kindness to me and for the solicitude he evinced in my studies. His private residence separated from ours only by a fence. Hearing the serious nature of my sickness, he came to his side of the fence and told my mother that he would send Dr. Gunther to see me. Under him I began to slowly recover. "No more study this year, my dear boy," he said; and when he saw me crying, he tried to assuage my sorrow by words of consolation. When Mr. Sealy came to know about the condition of my health, he wrote to me a very kind letter.

Nov. 2. 1889.

"My dear Kunju Krishnan,

I am very sorry your health does not allow of your further study at present. I hope the rest will do you good and that you will be able to come again next year. It is very painful to break up school ties and class friendships, but I am sure your friends all wish you complete restoration of health and a speedy return here as I do. I am writing to ask the Dewan to allow your scholarship to be granted again next year

if you are able to rejoin the V. A. class; but it can only continue for two years in all at the most.

Believe me,

Yours very truly

(Sd.) A. F. Sealy.

To him, and especially to the Dewan I am indebted to a degree that I could ill afford to adequately repay except by my full heart. Whenever I think of Dewan Govinda Menon I bow my head to his feet. I rejoined the College in 1889. I was still weak, and so was advised not to exert myself too much, in mind or body. However, H. H. Ravi Varma, Messrs. Konkoth Ramunni Menon, K. Chandy, Charles Viegas and others who joined the class by that time cheered me and helped me not a little. Here I think I shall do well to give a few extracts from my diary before I proceed further.

5-2 1889. H. H. Ravi Varma, the 8th Prince, passed the Matriculation examination. For the first time in the annals of Cochin, a scion of the Ruling Family appeared for a public examination. V. K. Govindan failed to get a pass a second time. I feel for him. * Feb. 7. Mr. Brown writes to me that my brother's *Firebrand* will shortly be published. * Feb. 15. I am selected to study with H. H. Ravi Varma. I generally have long talks with him. The more I come to know him, the more I have reasons to admire him. Began to read Bright's *Speeches*. His style is easy and forceful. Scott's poems too I read now and again. * Feb. 18. Messrs. K. P. Padmanabha Menon and Rajarama Rao lectured before the E. L. Union. * Feb. 28. Under the auspices of the Ernakulam Literary Union, Mathakhandana Sastri speaks on *Chathurmayam*. The Union presented an address of congratulation to H. H. on his success. * March 12. Prince began to attend College to-day. * March 13. As directed by brother, I sent two articles to the *Kerala Nandini* which is to be presently started at

Trichur. Went to Mr. Cruickshank as desired by him. He advised me what books to read as aids to the texts that I had to study. He particularly asked me to take down his notes, as, otherwise, the rest of the class also will imitate my example. During the course of the general talk, he said, "The Hindus must have a new religion. Let them go to their pure, pristine religion." Referring to my being called Aniyam by some, he remarked "You seem to be a brother of all." I replied "I wish I were, Sir; at any rate, I shall try to be." He liked my reply. Further, I said that it was only my near and dear relatives, and the intimate friends of my elder brother and of myself that called me so. He came to the gate, and, on parting, said "You can come to me whenever you want any help or advice." I thanked him. * March 27. Poor V. K. Govindan is suffering from small-pox. For the last two days he had severe fever, and I was attending on him. The Prince has sent a man to attend on him. Very kind of him. Death of John Bright. I felt sad as if one of my relatives is gone. * April 7. Wrote to the *Western Star* an obituary notice about Bright, as requested by Mr. Brown. Prince has kindly sent a desk for me to stand and read. What a generous gentleman! * April 8. Brother is ill at Chittur, I hear. Wired for more detailed information. His wife is there fortunately. * May, 12. On April 9, I caught small-pox. My mother refused to leave the house, but sent all those who have had not the disease before. My eldest sister looked after me, assisted by two attendants. Karanavan Rama Menon said it was only a slight attack, and, because of a nice boil between the eye-brows, I would be able to bathe soon. V. K. Govindan would drop in now and again. He regularly read to me the lives of great men from *the Worthies of the World*. While on my sick bed, I heard with relief that brother has come to Trichur and has placed himself under Dr.

Gomez. After I bathed, V. K. and myself went to Chowarah. V. K. lived with the Prince, and I with my cousin, Mr. Krishna Menon of the east Totakadi, who has married a niece of of my brother-in-law, Mr. K. Narayana Menon. He specially sent a messenger to my mother, to request her to send me to his residence at Chowarah (to be precise, at Thottummukham) for a change. I expressed my thanks to him when he said, "You are the boy to bring future glory to our family." I enjoyed my stay with him. We formed a good company--Karakadi Govinda Menon, Paramu Menon, Kurup Asan, and myself. From 8 to 10 in the morning, we used to be in the running river where others also would join us. There would be 20 to 25 persons in our group. There will be smaller groups in different parts of the river. What clear, crystal water! And the force of the current is so much as to remove all the oil in our body in a short time. Jokes, repartees, stories, recitation of nice *slohas*, all the gossip of the land—on account of these we never knew of the passage of time. Cards took a good part of the noon; we went out for boating soon after our tiffin. I used to visit the Prince and to have long talks with him. After ten days' stay, I went to see my brother at Trichur. He is much better and is convalescing. As my mother was anxious to see me, I came to Ernakulam for a short stay, and to-day I go back to Trichur as brother wants me there badly. • 14th May. Brother asks me to edit the *Kerala Nandini* for a week or two as M. Chathukutti Mannadiar, the editor, is out of the station. • 15th May. There is a new institution here in Trichur called the Hindu High School, started by my brother and some others, where religious instruction also is given. Mr. Guruswamy Sarma is its Head Master. He wants me to assist him to start a society for the students. I drafted a set of rules. Revised my elder sister's poem, *Parana-Sravana-Mahatmyam*, and

arranged for its speedy publication. * *May. 17.* Hearing that eldest brother is ill, I came to Ernakulam. Took him to Dr. Evans, the Civil Surgeon in British Cochin. Prince, who is stopping in the Dutch Palace at Mattancherry, gave me a note of introduction to the Doctor, which was of much use to me. Brother has to undergo an operation, and so the Doctor wants him to stay in Cochin for a fortnight. * *May. 19.* We began to stop in Anchery Madham in the palace compound. I was born in the Sircar Madham close by, where my father as Tasildar Magistrate, then lived. The presence of the Prince in the adjacent palace and the Bagavathi temple are other links to keep me here. Today the Prince showed and explained to me the mural paintings in the palace. Wonderful! Brother from Trichur asks me to find out a suitable person to be the editor of the *Nandini*. * *May. 21.* Consulted Mr. Kundur Narayana Menon about the choice of the editor. He read out to me his Malayalam rendering of Kalidasa's *Malavikagnimitram*. * *June. 2.* Babu Siddheswar Mitter, who is touring in the different parts of India, is here. Along with a classmate of mine, I visited him. He looked a rich man and a man of culture. He talked about some of the English and Sanskrit poets, on Buddhism and about his travels. He wanted to know all about the Nayar community. Here is a letter he wrote before his return to Calcutta: "6-6-1899. I shall never cease to have very pleasant recollections of my short sojourn in Ernakulam, and I need scarcely add that I will always remember you all with much gratitude. * I wish you all every success in your pursuit after knowledge, and all prosperity and happiness when you enter life. Be always open-hearted; try to do noble deeds, and live for others as much as you can; and the innate consciousness of having done your duty will be sufficient consolation to keep you afloat even under trying circumstances. What more can I say?"

Farewell." * *June. 7.* V. K. Govindan is ill. Took him to Dr. Subba Rao at Trippeonithura. The doctor told me, in private, "Your friend needs great care. Else, he will go mad, or become a paralytic." Poor friend failures have affected his nerves. * *June. 9.* As ordered by the Prince, I took V. K. to Dr. Evans. He agreed with Dr. Subba Rao, and said that "The young man requires rest and peace of mind and not medicine." * *June. 11.* Began to read the metrical translation of the *Phagvut Gita* by Mr. Telang. The preface to it by him is a marvellous essay. We wanted to start a Dramatic Association in the College; but, as Mr. Cruickshank is furiously opposed to it, we gave it up. * *Aug. 17.* Mr. Vellat Kunhikrishna Panikkar, whom we called Asan, is no more. Poor Asan. By his death, I lose a good friend, and his family its main stay, and the country an efficient officer and a sturdy patriot. * *August. 29.* Brother Srinana Swami of Allahabad, the Honorary Secretary of the Cow Protection movement, has come down to Ernakulam. He wears the garb of a *Saṅgasi*. Some of us gave him a place to live and a small sum of money for his meals. To-morrow he will address the students under the auspices of the E. L. Union on the subject of his movement. * *August. 31.* "When H. H. the Maharaja promised me a donation of a thousand rupees for the movement, the big guns of Ernakulam, want to sound my glories! But I told them that I am entirely satisfied with my young friends who are looking after me." So said the Swami to me to day. At times, he wants me to be his amanuensis. He wants rounded periods, and rattles on 'persecuting and prosecuting and so on in that strain. * *4th Jan. 1899.* Raman and myself went to Ollur for a prize distribution in a school there. Mr. Elinger Joseph pressed us so much to go, and even sent a nice conveyance to take us there. Waited an hour for the President, but he did not appear. All

at once, Raman proposed me to the Chair, and that proposal was accepted by the crowded audience with acclamation. I was on the horns of a dilemma. I was pressed to obey the mandate. God must have helped me to do the work, for I myself do not remember what all passed in the next hour. * *January 17.* Wrote to Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao for leave to translate his *Hints on the Training of Native Children*. * *Jan. 21.* Kunkikutta Tempuran Avl. read out to me the first act of his *Lekshanarangam* drama. So kind of him. He treats me as his friend and is very kind to me. * *January 24.* With Neduveli Sankara Menon and Harihara Iyer went to Cochin to collect signatures for the Fee memorial. We had no umbrellas and so had to walk in the sun. In one or two places we were discourteously shown the door. It was 4 p. m. when I had my bath and meals. Read Homer's *Odyssey*. * *February, 16.* Brother and Mr. Guruswami Sarma are out for collecting funds for the Hindu High School. I am asked to be with them. To-day we are at Irinjalkuday. Interview with Tachudaya Kaimal did not close with an encouraging response. * *February, 17.* Sivarathri. Brother went back to Trichur last evening. The rest of us came to Alwaye. Messrs. T. R. Raman Pillay and Mr. S. Krishna Pillay helped us a good deal. The Superintendent of Police and the Munsiff came to hear us. Speaking at night in the open, I got hoarse, and then caught a bad cold. * *February, 20.* My dear mother's birthday. Her horoscope stops with this the 58rd year. So we arranged the feeding of the poor on an elaborate scale. I have a great fascination for seeing the poor fed. To-day I took my meals only after that item was gone through. My mother was immensely pleased, and, when, at 4. p. m., after my bath, I went and prostrated at her feet before I took my meals, she shed tears of joy, pressed me to her bosom and blessed me. I felt I was in

Heaven for a few moments. • *February, 21.* Before my brother returned to Trichur, I took to him the donation list which Mr. K. Rajarama Rao and myself have opened to assist in starting a Caste Girls' School at Ernakulam. He offered me one rupee, and said he had similar demands on his purse at Trichur. My blood boiled within me. Local Demands! He is a native of Ernakulam. Should not charity begin at home? I refused to take that paltry sum. • *February, 25.* Visited Mr. Cruickshank. He asked me how Mr. Sealy took Tennyson. 'At a snail slow rate we go; but he makes it interesting.' I said, and added that I liked his Physiology hour better. He told me he was pleased to hear that I got 39 out of 40 in Trigonometry. While crossing to Cochin with an article to the *Star*, saw the Editor of the *Argus*. He introduced himself to me, and said I was a bold young man and knew me before. From where I wonder. I requested him to help us with a leader on the fee question. He said he would surely do so. • *May, 29.* Paid my respects to the Dewan. He asked me about my health and studies. Before taking leave of him, I introduced the subject of Victoria Jubilee Girls' school of Trichur and briefly represented what Raman had written to me about it and prayed for early favourable orders.

The letter, dated 27th Feb. 1890, referred to in the last entry, runs as follows:—

"Some time ago, you may perhaps remember, I wrote to tell you that the Jubilee School was in a fair way of being put on a better footing. The committee have written to the Dewan to kindly raise the standard of the school, and, pending orders, they have made certain arrangements to carry on the work of the new class. New hands can be appointed only after receiving orders from the Dewan. The school was established on the understanding that it was to be a

Middle School. The Dewan must have forgotten about the letter. So you must do your best to remind the Dewan of it, and, what is more, to get his consent to the proposal. You must not come away before the order is posted.

"Please bring your copy of *Everybody's Book*; if there is anything in it about cricket. Also get at least one wicket just to show the carpenters here what it is like. We may probably get one bat and ball to-day. Hope to see you here as soon as you can."

Both the girls' schools, the one at Trichur and the other at Ernakulam, in the developing of the one and in the starting of the other I had the privilege of assisting, are two of the foremost High Schools of the State. When, for the first time, two girls from the State passed their Middle School examination, I got up a meeting of the Cochinites in Madras, where I was studying then, and sent a letter of congratulation to them. One of them, the late Srinimai V. K. Lakshmikutty Valiya Nethyaramma, lead her sisters in the State. Her many-sided accomplishments, her genial ways and her very warm wish to

Cochin in the vanguard among the Indian States, eminently fitted her for the place she then so deservedly occupied. The other was the late Mrs. V. K. Sankara Menon, a cousin of Mr. G. Achyuta Menon.

From the nature of the entries in my Diary one might be tempted to suppose that I was not a student then, or, at least that I was neglecting my studies. But really it was not so. I worked with a system; and during my hours of study, I put my whole heart into it, and so was able to finish it in due time. Even Mr. Cruickshank had never once to complain that I had not prepared my lessons. In all the three or four years with him, only on one occasion I had to go and tell him before he came to the class that I had no time to get ready with that day's lesson. He was glad I went and told him so, and he readily

excused me. Even for the debates and recitations in the Literary Union, I used to prepare thoroughly; for I realised that in that way alone, I could derive any benefit from them. To recite before a meeting of the Union the speech of Telemachus before the Assembly of the Wise, I had to read a good deal to get myself in touch with the environments and the feelings of the speaker. Such performances will tire one, but they will have the desired effect on the audience.

For exercise, I used to go for vigorous morning walks; occasionally I had boating, and, on almost all evenings, I played tennis at the palace. But, in spite of all these, or because of them, I again began to be troubled with palpitation of my heart towards the middle of September 1890.

The F. A. examination was nearing, and I felt uneasy in mind. On consulting Dr. Subba Rao, he said I must stop my studies for some time! On coming home, I began to cry. My mother was then at Trichur. Mr. Venkat Rao sent for his friend, Dr. Subba Rao; and, after a private talk between the two, the doctor permitted me to study for two hours daily in the morning. Mr. Sealy came to know of my trouble. Unasked, he generously gave me a note of introduction to Dr. Elcum, L. M. S., the Civil Surgeon in Cochin, and asked me to see him at once. Dr. Elcum was a very nice man. He had a scholarly, aristocratic look about him. After reading the letter, he smiled and asked me to sit down. Then he congratulated me on my success in his Physiology paper, for Mr. Sealy had written to him, so the Dr. told me, that I was the boy who scored full marks in that. It was only after some talk on general subjects that he examined me. After that, he gave me a prescription and said, "It is only the result of nervous weakness. It will pass off as you grow old. I had it while studying medicine in London; but I used to take headers in the Thames. Please don't

worry over it. But do not take any violent exercise, and read only moderately, until you feel better."

In spite of these handicaps, I secured a 2nd class in the F. A. Examination, distinction in one or two subjects, and the third place in the class in general results.

ii. My College days—

In the Presidency College, Madras.

To study for our B. A. course, Mr. Parakkal Krishna Menon and myself went to join the Madras Presidency College, in 1894, armed with a letter from Mr. A. F. Sealy to Dr. D. Duncan, who was then its Principal. Dr. Duncan was a man with a dignified presence and high character. He was a great friend and disciple of Herbert Spencer whose life he wrote and published subsequently. His son is named Spencer Duncan. Dr. Duncan read the letter, looked at us and said, "So you are Mr. Sealy's students. To what section do you want to go?" Mr. Sealy's students were in those days well-known for their neat, industrious habits, and for their good conduct. Mr. Appu Menon went to the Philosophy section and I to the Chemistry class. Not only did I like Chemistry, but I had also then an idea to study medicine after graduation. My friends advised me to take any subject other than Chemistry, because they said that Chemistry was a difficult subject, and with Dr. Wilson it was simply impossible to get on. He was reputed to have a violent temper and a powerful flow of language. But, for the sake of the science, I was prepared to face difficulties.

I am not prepared to say that my friends were not somewhat right in their estimate of the subject and of its Professor. For, both did not attract many votaries, and, in my class, there were only six students, Messrs. Ramanarayanaingar, who became famous as the Raja of Panagal, A. Srivinas Pai, an

advocate in Mangalore and the managing Director of the Canara Bank, Parsons, Evans, Kesava Rao and myself. But, to own a confession, I did not find Dr. Wilson the rough task-master he was represented to be by those who had not known him closely. He was blunt and a little irritable; but, as a professor, he was, I must say, brilliant. His lectures were illuminating and his experiments neat and exact. He would never spare his students. Once a student had a bad cap on; as soon as the class assembled, he spotted it and said, "Look here, that cap evidently belonged to your grandfather. Please do not wear it, but keep it as an heirloom." Some one on another day came with an over-dose of scent on his head or on his handkerchief, I forget which; he was ever after called by the Professor, "the Cherry Blossom." On another occasion, one of us unintentionally let fall a few coins. At once came Dr. Wilson's remark, "There is some one here who has got more money than brain." Of course all these were said in perfect good humour, and, perhaps, with an idea that the erring student should improve. On a sultry day, I was working at a salt in the laboratory. I had divested myself of my coat, but the turban I kept as there was the tuft underneath it. Dr. Wilson came in and stood by my side to see if I had kept my desk, almirah and reagents clean, and I was working properly. Just as he was leaving me, he asked me to keep away my turban lest it might catch fire. When I referred to the tuft, "Remove that too," he said. I told him that my aged mother had advised me not to do that. "O, I shall write to her that, otherwise, you will be burnt by fire or dissolved in perspiration," smiled, and went to the desk of another student to chide him and to cheer him up.

The Director once issued an order that all professors should wear their gowns while they took their class. When next he came to the class, he had no

coat, and his shirt-sleeves were tucked up. He prefaced his lecture of that day with these words: "My Heidelberg gown is in shreds, and I do not want to exhibit that tattered article to the world. You see I have not insured my life; even if I have, I am not going to burn myself to be a martyr to Chemistry. These big men at times lose all sense of propriety, I tell you." He got himself exempted from the operation of that order on the very plausible pretext that he was in charge of an experimental science.

He was collecting stamps; and, when he knew I came from Cochin, he asked me to get him samples of every variety of used stamps. I took them to his hotel; for then he was living in the Elphinstone Hotel. He catechised me about the Cochin State, advised me as to my studies, and sent me back only after I took tea with him. Thereafter, he was extremely kind to me, and even gave me his own books for my study.

He knew not only to give but also to take a retort and that in good part. He allowed his students to be free with him. When once I erred in replying to a question of his in the class, he remarked, "You write like an angel, but talk like poor pol." I returned by saying, "If you allow little fishes talk, they too will talk like whales." "So you have read Boswell," he said with a smile and continued, "But I have not restricted your freedom of speech. Have I?" He had a large heart.

The other professors under whom I had to learn were Messrs. J. Bilderbeck, E. H. Eliot, Muli-yil Krishna, Jones and Hobday. Mr. Hobday was Dr. Wilson's Assistant. He was in charge of the Laboratory section and had not to lecture to us. He was a very nice and conscientious person. He used to tell my classmates that they should keep their things, and do the experiments as neatly as I did. Mr. Jones was the Professor of Physical Science. He was a

young man and new to the College. He helped us in our games and was always accessible to us. Mr. Krishnan, the Malayalam Munshi, and myself were good friends. He was also the Malayalam Translator to the Government of Madras. He frequently invited me to his house, where I was considered as one of the inmates, so intimate was our friendship. On his advice I appeared for the Translation Higher Examination. I got a first class, and I believe I was the first among the successful Malayali candidates. This is the certificate he gave me unasked.

"M. R. Ry., T. Kunchi Krishna Menon, B.A., was my student for two years, while preparing for his B. A. degree Examination; during that time he gave me complete satisfaction by his ability, intelligence, and exceptionally good conduct. His knowledge of Malayalam is far above that of ordinary B. As. His *Ancient India* and *Chandrasekara*, translations into Malayalam from English, bear ample testimony to his thorough command in both the languages and have been deservedly prescribed as texts by the local University for its F. A. Examination."

The other two, Messrs. Bilderbeck and Elliot, were in charge of the English branch. Mr. Bilderbeck taught us very well, but we thought he was a bit pompous and pendentic. While Dr. Wilson never permitted us to take notes of his lectures, Mr. Bilderbeck liked, even insisted on our doing so. "Mine is an experimental science; so use your eyes and lend me your ears. You need not come to my class with your pencils and note-books," so Dr. Wilson said on the first time we went to his lecture-room. Mr. Bilderbeck had his favourites. Mr. Konkoth Ramunni Menon was one; he stood first among these, I should say. I was happy to be one of them and used to get invitations to go to his house for tea and talks. There, at his Saturday parties, the company fluctuated, but instruction and geniality

remained. Some sat tongue-tied when he went on with his comments on our essays and hints as to our studies; others showed that they were keenly alive to his kindness and to the incentive he gave us to feel that there were laurels to be won and garlands to be run for in our collegiate course. Those occasions he also used to put us into intimate contact with the beauties of the English literature and the intricacies of the English language. While a member of the Senate, I was privileged to preside at a meeting in the Presidency College, convened to concert measures to raise a memorial to him. My friend, Mr. A. V. Kuttikrishna Menon, was the moving spirit in it, and moved the main resolution at the meeting.

Mr. Elliot had a sleepy way of taking his class. I fear I have not seen his eyes fully open. A long time he spent in taking the attendance of the class, abusing and cursing some of us, in a mild and friendly fashion of course, for owning long and unpronounceable names. Mr. Vydias, a tall, big, fat man from north Malabar, once stood up and protested against Mr. Elliot's criticism by saying, in his usual humorous way, "Sir, we are not responsible for our names. They are given us by our parents on the 28th day after our birth." Mr. Elliot, not much moved by these words, only drawled out in his sleepy manner, "Oh! now I see your aspect of the question," and attempted to smile. But with all that, he was strong in English and taught us well. In our class he knew Messrs. Parsons and Evans and also, perhaps, Roxario, Anglo-Indians all, but not an Indian student. There was a meeting of the students of the Presidency College to express their sorrow over the death of Tennyson. The examination hall, where we held the meeting, was crowded. On the platform there were the President, Mr. G. H. Stuart, who was then the Principal, and Professors Ranganathan,

Sathyanatham and Elliot and a few others whose names I do not now remember. I seconded the first resolution, which was moved by my friend Mr. K. Ramunni Menon. Tennyson has all along been my favourite poet. So every word I said I felt; and, from the way in which my speech was received by the audience, I knew my words had gone home. Next day, I was talking with some friends near the pedestal of Powell's statue, when Mr. Elliot came in. He motioned me to go to him. When I went to him, this talk took place between us, which that night I recorded in my diary.

"E. Where do you come from ?

I. From Ernakulam, in the Cochin State.

E. So you know Mr. Sealy and Mr. Cruickshank.

I. They are my revered teachers.

E. Mr. Stuart spoke very highly of your speech. It was a nice one. The accentuation was quite English. The delivery was good. One could see that you felt what you said. Professor Ranganathan said he was charmed by your speech. Mind you, it is a very high compliment, coming as it does from him; and I congratulate you on it. In what class are you?

I. I am in the senior B. A., Sir; I thank you for your kind remarks. Perhaps, you will be glad to hear that I stood first in your Chaucer paper.

E. Oh ! are you the boy ? I shall be glad to see you again." He shook his hands with me and went. He must have forgotten all about me at the next moment; and from the way he behaved to us in the class, I never cared to see him again. But his talk to me was a matter of great surprise to the students, for he rarely unbent himself like that.

When Dr. Wilson went on long leave, Professor Rangachari lectured to us on Chemistry for about a month. After that, Mr. C. Krishnan, who had then

just returned from England, took charge of us till the return of Dr. Wilson. Mr. Krishnan, after passing as first in Chemistry here, went to England with a Government of India Scholarship for further studies in that science at Cambridge. He died as a Judge of the High Court of Madras. He knew Chemistry very well, took an interest in it and taught us nicely; but for clear, earnest and eloquent exposition of it, Dr. Wilson, among the professors, easily carried the laurels. Mr. Krishna was from the start, very kind to me, because, perhaps I was the only Malayali in my class of six students, and also because I adored him as a great Indian scientist. Mr. Krishnan strictly kept to the time-table, which Dr. Wilson never did. More often than not, Dr. Wilson lectured to us between 4 and 6 in the evenings. As I liked to play at tennis, Mr. Vittal Rao, a brother of judge Mr. Lakshmana Rao's father, a well-known tennis-player, and myself had to play tennis at noon. Both of us were so keen on our game that we dared to face the April noon-day sun at Madras. That was a feat. Mr. Krishnan had one failing; he induced us to work on Saturdays even. One such Saturday I still remember. One Friday evening, after lecture, he said "If any of you want to do experiment with aldehyde ammonia, I shall arrange everything for you tomorrow." Mr. Parsons and myself said we would, although I had a very heavy programme of work for the next day. Early next morning, I had to show certain persons from Cochin round the town, return the revised proofs of the catalogue of the Trichur Library to the press attached to the *Madras Standard*, to arrange for the printing of the rules of the Presidency College Tennis Club, and also to meet, as previously requested by him, my friend Mr. G. P. Pillai, the Editor of the *Standard*. All these duties I got through before 11:30 a. m., and went to the College without taking meals, as I knew Mr. Parsons would be waiting for me there

in the laboratory. At 3-30 p.m., Mr. Krishnan dropped in. He was pleased with the tabulated results of our work, and pointed out where we could have done better. But, when he knew from Mr. Parsons that I had been working with an empty stomach, after a tiring jaunt in town on that sultry April day, his face grew grave and he mildly chided me and kindly took me at once to my lodge in his carriage. On the way he told me how I should spend my vacation.

During the summer recess of 1892, Mr. C. Krishnan visited Trichur on the invitation of H. H. Ravi Varma. H. H. asked me to go to Shoranur on the 25th of June to receive Mr. Krishnan and to escort him to Trichur. When nearing Wadakkanchery, he was so charmed with the hills and dales and the green rice-fields that he suggested that he would walk, and we did walk nine miles. On the bridge at Wadakkanchery we halted for some time. "This does not look like a town with courts and cutcheries. It is a happy little village where one would long to linger. Is it not so?" he asked me. I fully agreed with him, and told him I was familiar with the hills around. Then, on our way, he talked to me of village life in England, and of his college days at Cambridge. The Prince took him round the town. At times, I was also asked to go with them. After a stay of three days, he went away, saying that he wished to come back and make a long stay at Trichur, as it had captivated his heart.

I knew from one or two friends who were holding high offices in Madras that Mr. Krishnan had entertained high hopes of me; for he told them of my "nice behaviour, studious habits and extraordinary intelligence", and crowned his remarks, it seems, by saying that I would be "the Arni medalist for Chemistry of the next year."

But the Fate and the Furies were against me. For some days before the examination, granular ophthalmia troubled me, and, although I was the only

one in the first class in Malayalam, I got only a second class in English,—and in Chemistry!—that was my saddest hit. While, working at a salt, in the practical examination, I could not find out any clue to identify the salt. That puzzled me. I was heating the test-tube over the spirit-lamp, and, unwittingly wiped it with the right hand. I knew what I did only when three of my fingers were singed. Oh! the pain of it still creeps into my head when I think of that incident. I went and briefly told Mr. Hobday what took place and said I was going home. He applied something to my fingers, bandaged them and, with folded hands, said “I am very sorry for you. For goodness’ sake, my boy, remain and finish the work.”

I thanked him, but insisted on going home, as I was suffering from intense pain. He sent me to my residence in his push-push. I shall not describe the mental and the physical agony I suffered. I simply cried like a child.

Dr. Wilson knew nothing of this when he said, “You have done much better than many in the theoretical portion and worse than any in the practical test. How is it?” When he heard my explanation, he was very sorry. “Why did you not tell me at once? I could have found out some way to help you.” My eyes began to fill with water. He noticed my sorrow. “Don’t be sorry. That is the way of the world. You can’t expect to be on the top of the wave always. Be of good cheer—get the medal next year.” But, as that was the first reverse in my scholastic career, it took a long time for me to get over that agonising defeat.

* * *

Where the Triplicane Post Office stands, four roads meet; one that leads to the south takes us to the Parthasarathy temple; and the second that goes east will lead us to the Presidency College and the sea-beach. At first, for about two years, I lived in the

house, adjoining the Post Office, on the former road; and, during the rest of my stay in Madras, in the last house on the latter road which is known as the Py-croft's Road. Both these houses are situated very near the College; so that, without any trouble and loss of time, I was able to take part in the sports and societies and other amenities of the College life. The College stands, a magnificent edifice, facing the famous marina and the sea. Now it is considerably enlarged, and its array of science buildings shows its endeavours to meet the demands of modern learning. But a modern student who is, perhaps, more familiar with the increasing distractions to study, and with the thronged streets, roaring motor traffic, and the slogans of various political movements, can hardly conceive of the dignified and mellowed charm of the edifice of my days or of the air of its repose when the students were with the professors or had dispersed for their holidays. Messrs. Karimpatta Rama Menon, his nephew Mr. Kochuuni Menon, and myself lived together for the major portion of my sojourn in Madras. We formed the inseparable three; others who joined and lived with us for two or three years were Messrs. Konkoth Ramunni Menon, C. Rama-krishna Pillai, Karakkadt Govinda Menon, Elaydeth Narayana Menon, Kuppakadi Govinda Menon, Palliyil Krishnan Menon, and Kaimakulangara Achyuta Menon. Sir Ramunni Menon became the vice-Chancellor of the Madras University, while Narayana Menon and Kuppakadi Govinda Menon retired as Conservators of Forests in the Cochin State. The late Mr. Achyuta Menon even in those days maintained a fine standard of chest and carriage and cultivated a taste for hearty eating. His preposterous dietary was never, I hear, reduced to normal dimensions. He was called the Big Achu in contradistinction to Mr. Karimpatta Achyuta Menon who was called the Little Achu. Mr. Karimpatta Achyuta Menon lived with his relatives,

the Kannampara Nairs, in the Sydoji Street which, from the Pycroft's Road, near the Post Office, branched off to the north. There was a very spacious house where we generally held our meetings and parties. The opposite house was occupied by Messrs. Edakkunni Ikkanda Warriar and Parakkal Krishna Menon. Mr. K. Krishnan Pandalai, who later on became an L. L. D. and a Judge of the Madras High Court, was living in Hanumanthalala Lane in a small house close to our residence. He was a constant and welcome visitor to our lodge. I shall never forget the help he and Mr. Kannan, who retired as a sub-Judge, both Arni medalists in Chemistry, gave me in the study of that science. Both Dr. K. Krishnan Pandalai and his brother Dr. Gopinath Pandalai have been good friends of mine. I am tempted to quote a few extracts from their letters received at distant dates. Both are extraordinarily clever, each in his walk of life—law and medicine—in which they reached the pinnacle of glory. Dr. Krishnan Pandalai looked a hard-bitten nomad who loved the spacious land and the adventurous life, while his brother always appeared calm and collected as if he kept his own counsel.

Trivandrum, 25-12-1088. "... There are few who will be so pleased at my good fortune as yourself. For we climb the hill together and many a catty day we've had with one another. Will you give my respects to your wife who has been so good to me and uniformly kind? . . . I long to tell you and your wife about England and English ways. In short, no one who has a soul above his vocation will come back from England without regret. I went when life was becoming blank and objectless. I have come back with youth and imagination, and can dream the old dreams again Your affectionate friend (Sd.) K. Pandalai."

Park Town, Madras. 2-12-1914. "It is indeed so kind of you to write to convey your congratulations

with the same warmth of friendship which we kindled long ago and which distance cannot cool nor time kill. . . . About a week ago, I got a cable announcing my degree. As for my prospects, they are in the womb of the future. After many ups and downs, you see me still fighting hard and ready to fight harder, and I am determined to fight to the end of the chapter. Yours as ever affectionately (Sd) K. Pandalai."

Lanark Hall, Vepery, Madras. 13-11-1922. "We had a most enjoyable journey. I am taking over charge tomorrow and expect to be quite busy afterwards Wife and I send you and Mrs. Menon our most affectionate regards and thanks for all the kindness we received at your hands. We both felt happy and at home while with you and shall always cherish joyous memories of our stay at Ernakulam. Yours affectionately (Sd) Gopinath Pandalai."

Binfield, Kilpauk, Madras.

24-1-'37.

My dear Friend,

. I am not acting in haste, but have asked for long leave preparatory to retirement. This may be sanctioned; only if this is refused, will I retire at once. . . My eldest brother knows about these things.

I have reconciled myself to the change. Private work has been ample for many years I am not worrying on this account.

I cannot feel sufficiently grateful for your kind and wise words. Friends in trouble are true friends.

Yours affectionately

(Sd) Gopinath Pandalai.

Our residence was an unpretentious one, but the inmates always formed a happy family. We were a mirthful crew and never cultivated gloom. A short of republican rule we adopted in the management of the affairs of the lodge. Rama Menon and myself

guided the show, although we did not take any active part in it. All the inmates were extremely comfortable, always contented and happy. There was no hitch, nor rub, nor unpleasantness of any kind to mar the brotherly feeling that reigned supreme in the house. Even Karakkadt Govinda Menon, a scrupulously fastidious dilettante, had only praise for our domestic felicity. He was a good looking man and knew it. No doubt, he was one who could be easily pleased; even Munian, our left-handed barber, knew it, and, clever fellow that he was, took advantage of it. After a shave, he would tell my friend "Oh! you look like Cupid now," and get a few additional coppers for that flattering remark of his. But this weakness should not lessen the value of his heart-felt praise. Every one was expected to have regular hours for study, meals and exercise. We never connived at any lagging nor condoned any culprit among us. But we had a novel way of dispensing justice. There was an inveterate late-riser among us. No amount of private advice nor of overt talk had any effect on him. So, one fine morning, while he was snoring on his bed, we placed lighted candle-ends all round his bed, and raised a loud wail as if he was dead. Ah! the bathos of it! That ludicrous situation in which he was placed cured him of his untimely sleep. Though this incident got wind among the Malayali residents in Madras, no sting there was in it, and no breach of cordiality arose out of it.

By our social habits and courtly behaviour, we were popular not only among the Malayalis but also among the east coast students, many of whom frequented our lodge as friends. Though there was a Cochinite Union, we took part in the Travancore Malayali Association as well, and invariably attended the social functions got up by British Malabar friends of ours. Every year our Oman gathering was a well-known event in our Madras life. We used to have a

common dinner, indoor and outdoor games during the rest of the day, and a variety entertainment at night. The last event covered theatricals, farces and humorous recitations, and drew a crowded, and cultured audience. Many of us have appeared on the stage; and Mr. T. M. Krishna Menon's role of a servant and my part of a criminal vakil created a sensational surprise and formed a topic of talk among the Malnyalis for many a day. For they had taken us to be sedate, serious persons incapable of any humorous expression. So also the magic performance of Dr. Chittayil Ramunni Menon assisted by Dr. Valiyathan was a great success. Mr. C. S. Gopala Panikker proved himself to be an excellent actor. There were others, but I do not remember their names now.

To the college games we did a bit of lasting service. When we joined the college, there was a gymnastic peon whom to know is to remember him. He was a well-built Musulman, with a fine figure and a winning smile, and knew well the art of extracting presents from students. He was in charge of the tennis-nets, and the bats and wickets for cricket. Each student had to provide himself with not alone rackets, that one can understand, but also balls. We got more exercise by picking the balls than by playing with them. So, with the help of Messrs. K. Krishnan Pandalai, K. A. Kannan, P. T. Sreenivasa Chari and others, we started an Athletic Association under the auspices of which we had a cricket club and a football club. Mr. Jones, the Professor of Physical Science, was the first President of the association. Mr. Pandalai was the Captain and Mr. Kannan the Vice-Captain of the Football Field. Mr. Pandalai cared not for the rituals of any game; but all games he loved and played them with gusto. Mr. Karimpatta Achyuta Menon was the best player among us in cricket and football. He always played as the centre forward in the football field; and, during matches, he

always liked to have me as a centre halfback. Big Achu and Mr. Panikkaveetil Govinda Menon played as backs. Mr. Govinda Menon was familiarly known as Valleytan, the big brother. Each of these backs, though they never cared much for passing the ball, could easily kick the ball to the opposite goal. Mr. Hanumantha Pai, the goal-keeper, was, like the backs, a strong, stout and imposing person. These three formed an impregnable combination. The Football Club organised an annual tournament and instituted a silver cup as a trophy for the best team. In the first year, the first match was between the Presidency College and the Kumbakonam College. Compared to their players, many of our team were pigmies. Their captain in particular was a stalwart giant. He tripped me. For that foul play, we never sought the help of the umpire. But when he next came, myself, big Achu and Mr. Hanumantha Pai tactfully tripped him. After the third fall, he did not rise up soon. I went up to him, and asked him whether he would have a bottle of soda. When he said 'no' in a brusque manner, I came away. But he knew that we were not to be trifled with and we parted as friends. There were only few competing teams that year, and the Presidency College won the cup. There was a social gathering in honour of that event. It was held in the College grounds. Refreshments were served on a lavish scale; and many speeches were made in proposing and responding to the several toasts. It was a most enjoyable function in which some of our professors also had joined us, on the distinct understanding, so they said, that their presence should on no account mar our hilarity. It never did; we let ourselves go under the leadership of Mr. Pandalai. This social party gave rise to a commotion among the old, orthodox persons in Triplicane, and we also heard that some one or two of the College team got a thrashing for eating and drinking with the rest of the party.

But no body took it seriously; for even those who were caned used to eat and drink on similar occasions after that. We used to arrange matches on certain Fridays and Saturdays, for there would be no college work the next day. On such days, after play, we would sit on the green dewless lawns, sans shirts and coats, hear the laughter of the unnumbered waves of the ocean, watch the twilight darken over the buildings, when we discussed the whole universe with confidence and when new friendships were born under cover of mirthful talk. Though, for four consecutive years, I was in the tournament teams, twice for the Presidency and twice for the Law College, yet, to make a confession, I liked tennis better than football. In tennis, Mr. Kochunni Menon was the most graceful player among us. He had the supple wrist and the faultless eye like his cousin Achyutha Menon who shone on the cricket field. Mr. Rama Menon was also an enthusiastic player at tennis. Though I gave up cricket after some time, I never missed great matches that were played on the grounds of the English Club. How many days have I sat with Rama Menon and others under the sultry sun with only an umbrella for a cover and watched the play with interest. If a soldier or a small military officer were by our side, he would make the time fly faster with his funny remarks. Once a pompous mass of humanity came and unceremoniously stood in front of us so as to hide our view. At once a remark was shot from a soldier close by, "Look here, is your father a glazier?"; and, when that body portentously turned round to see what the matter was, our friend capped the first question with its commentary, "Anyway, you are not transparent." In the midst of the laughter that these jokes evoked, that undifferentiated mass of proptoplasm collapsed, and we regained our view. In spite of it all, I liked boating best. And when we came home, I used to go out for boating,

whether I happened to be at Trichur, Ernakulam or Chowarah. There is nothing in sports that I liked so much as a four-oared saunter on the calm lagoons near Ernakulam. I am a votary of sports; I am not ashamed to own that fact. But I would rather like to see the development of indigenous games among my brothers and sisters in Kerala than the costly ones of the west. When, in the Thulam of 1094, the Cochin Athletic Association was formed through the enthusiastic exertions of Mr. M. Balakrishna Menon, a son of Mr. C. Achyuta Menon, I was elected to its Executive and Tournament Committees. I was then instrumental in introducing a few of the Malabar games in the items of the program. Wherever I got a chance, I espoused the cause of Indian sports. "I have great pleasure to inform you", writes the Head Master of a School in Kaladi, on 22-6-1117, "that I have introduced native football and kaikottikali in the school, as suggested by you, when you had been here year before the last to preside over the annual prize-distribution function." But this does not mean that I dislike the western games. Certainly it should not be understood like that. Here is a speech that I delivered at a badminton tournament. That I trust will remove any vestiges of a doubt like that.

"Gentlemen,—Let me in the first place, thank you for the honour you do me to-day by asking me to preside at this pleasant function. No doubt, I would gladly exchange my place with that one of the players that I see before me; yes, even with that of one of those who have lost in this day's tournament. For, in spite of their defeat, these have exhibited such grit and game as to arrest the praise of the winners themselves. I wish them better luck next time.

"It is very encouraging to see so many votaries of badminton before me. For, your enthusiasm in its cause is, I believe, a sufficient refutation to those

who belittle it as an effeminate game. I am not unacquainted with cricket; with pardonable pride, I may say that I can pull an oar as well as many a boatman; I know sufficiently well of tennis as not to be an infliction to my partners; and I have taken an active part in several football matches. And, yet, I am not prepared to say that badminton is not a manly sport. Oh! it must be a callous heart indeed, dead to all sporting instincts, that cannot enjoy, at least, appreciate, the exercise and excitement it gives. I wish such men were present here today. For, then, the fine play of these teams would certainly have knocked such wrong notions out of them, and left them wiser men than now. Advocates of badminton, may your tribe increase!

"I believe this is the first time in the annals of our small State when an organised attempt of a private nature has been made to popularise physical culture. For this your committee, and particularly Rev. Fr. Raphael D'Cruz, Rev. Fr. Peter D'Lima and Mr. L. M. Pylee deserve the thanks of the educated public of Cochin. Only those who have had experience in matters of this sort that can realise the worry, the trouble and the anxiety that invariably accompany the successful carrying out of a tournament like this. Cochinites are grateful to you, and pray that your efforts to spread the cause of physical education in our country may be crowned with the success they deserve.

"You have begun well and you have started the scheme under very auspicious circumstances. For H. H. the Maharaja has been graciously pleased to give it the imprimatur of His Highness' sanction by donating the handsome sum of Rs. 100 for a cup which we see before us. Let us echo the sentiments of your energetic secretary voiced in his expression of the profound gratitude to His Highness for this generous gift. I hope there will be in the years to

come more teams to compete for the cup, and that it will be possible for the committee to hold the tournament at such a time as will enable more educational institutions to take part in this.

"It only remains for me to congratulate the winning team and to request its members, on behalf of the Committee, to accept the gold medals for the brilliant way in which they have acquitted themselves in this tournament."

I request the reader to go back with me to Madras.

The inmates of our lodge would at times go for an opera or a circus, but rarely for a Tamil drama. The Fillis' Circus created quite a stir in the town. The artistes of that company were very clever men; the clown was a man of culture and one of the best athletes I have seen. He knew how to control even a boisterous audience. Once, over a slip, when the medical students set up a howl, the clown came on the scene and, facing them, said, "How well you imitate your brother's voice!"; and then, the laugh was on his side, and perfect silence reigned thereafter.

I have let my pen run until by this time the reader may incline to believe that we were mainly concerned with our efforts in sports. We were not. Our chief preoccupation was study. We never forgot that for a moment. But we also recognised the value of games as a concomitant of education, making their contribution both to health and to character. An educated individual is, I suppose, "one who has had his innate qualities of mind, body and heart fully developed in order to fit him for life as a sane and intelligent person, as a member of society and as a citizen." I shall conclude this part of my life-history with a few extracts from my diary. * 6-3-1881. A few of us met and started the College Tennis Club. I am asked to frame the rules, as,

perhaps, I chanced to preside at the meeting. • 19-3-1891. Convocation-day. I am not at all sorry because I could not go. For I had been the cause of joy to two to whom I gave the two tickets I got. • 21-3-1891. Went to read Bacon (Advancement of Learning) with the Prince. • 27-3-1891. Brother writes to me that I should put off all reserve with him, and that I should behave towards him as a brother and friend and not as an youngster and inferior. He says he is ready to send me any sum, and that I need not render accounts to him. But, I think, I must send up my monthly accounts as that course will be a check to any extravagance on my part. He denounces the idea of giving English education to our girls. There I differ from him. • 8-5-1891. Went to Mylapore to visit Mr. K. P. Sankara Menon. Saw Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon, his brother, there. He said that the Dewan (Mr. Thiruvankata Chariar) is growing from bad to worse. He is having a foreigner as his Secretary. It seems he has promulgated a notice that no Prince can go out of Cochin without the express consent of the Ruler. Cochinites stand disunited. It seems Mr. P. M. is come to engage Mr. Norton to prepare a memorial to be submitted to His Highness the Raja on behalf of the Princes. Had a long evening walk with Raman when we talked about Tennyson and Keats, and the difference between the bringing up of the European and Malayali children. • 19-5-1891. Reached Ernakulam. So happy to meet my mother. Started the revision of my elder sister's drama *Subhadrarajyam*, • 28-5-1891. Visited Mr. Sealy. A long talk about my Chemistry studies. • 30-5-1891. Gave the drama of my sister to the Bharatha-vilasam Press for getting it printed. The Manager introduced me to Kaikolamgara Rama Warriar who happened to be there. I worshipped that great scholar. He said he would read the manuscript and furnish a *slokan* to be printed in it. Then

he said, "Let me go in to finish my work. I must then take some money and buy the things wanted for to-day." These words caused me intense pain. I made up my mind to write an article about him so as to attract the notice of the educated public to his present pitiable condition. Patron is gone, public is yet to come. • 23-6-1891. Began to read the life of Keshub Chunder Sen after finishing that of James Garfield, the Pioneer Boy who became the President of the United States. What an inspiring life this. But I like Abraham Lincoln most. He is one of my outstanding heroes • 19-10-1891 Last night *Sathadharjanam* was staged. We had a very good, appreciative audience. My old teacher from Kerala Vidya Sala, Mr. Damodaran Namputiripad, was present. He is now the Malayalam Lecturer in the Pachaiyappa's College. He complimented me on my histrionic skill. I alone know how much time and trouble I had over my part. • 12-3-1892. Took the College Gymnastic peon to the residence of the Princes to mark the lines of their new tennis-court. Then I had to go with them to buy the net, bats and balls. • 19-3-1892. Prof. C. Krishnan has asked me to go to Mr. C. Sankaran Nayar's residence tomorrow morning for tennis. I wish I could go. Saw Kochunni who is sick in the hospital. Purchased medicine for Pally who is sick at home. • 20-3-1892. Big Achu had a sprain in his leg and was howling out last night like a child. Sat near him for a long while and fanned him. However, Raman and myself went to play with Mr. Krishnan. • 21-3-1892. Mr. Muliyl Krishnan told me that my sister's drama has been prescribed as a text for study for F. A. I expressed my gratefulness to him for his kind act. • 26-3-1892. As requested by G. P., I had joined the Order of the Good Templars. But, to-day, we all Hindus had to resign and come away, because the authorities refused to accept a reasonable resolution proposed by G. P., regarding the use of a

book. We met at once and resolved to start the Indian Order of Total Abstinens (I. O. T. A. we called it) on the very lines of the other institution, omitting, of course, the procedure objected to by us. G. P.'s speech was brilliant. His points were unanswerable, and his delivery excellent. * 12-6-1892. Prince (H. H. Ravi Varma) refused to sign the memorial, prepared by Mr. E. Norton. I was asked to speak to him on the subject. Some of his grounds are, I believe, sound; so I thought it indelicate to press the matter further. Let the elders advise him as to the course he should follow. * 15-6-1892. Both Mr. P. Gopala Menon and Mr. Nallamat Narayana Menon were telling me of the present deplorable condition of the Cochin Reform Association and the schism that exists among the elderly educated people in Cochin; and no one is working to stem the downward tide. * 12-7-1892. A few of us went out boating. We went to the Elthuruth Convent, and then to Matamma Thoppu where Mr. Edakkunni Ikkanda Warriar now lives. The Vicar gave us fruits at the Convent, and we were treated to rich refreshments by Ikkanda Warriar. As the distance was long, we had taken fruits, sweets and good drinking water with us in the boat. * 4-12-1892. Went out to arrange a house for Peishcar (my brother-in-law) and to show the town to those who have come with him. Nice job for a student whose ordeal is nearing. Can't help it.

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There were, besides H. H. Ravi Varma, two other Princes studying in Madras. They formed the first set to step out of their State for study. H. H. Ravi Varma was in the B. A. class, while the other two joined the F. A. class. Of these, H. H. Kerala Varma (the present Ruler) graduated in philosophy and was for some time the Malayalam Translator to the Govt. of Madras, while the other, the nephew of the first,

familiarly known as Kochu Tampuran, died prematurely. It was in his name that a prize was instituted, on my motion, by the Ernakulam Literary Union in the Sircar Girls' High School at Ernakulam; for he early gave promise of a bright, glorious day. H. H. Ravi Varma had taken up history as his optional subject. He had, owing to ill health, to give up his studies subsequently. While at College, they were given a separate room to retire and had special seats in their classes. They conducted themselves in such a pleasant and dignified manner that they were sincerely respected by their Professors and their classmates. H. H. Ravi Varma was, as I said, one of the younger brothers of the abdicated Ruler who was then the Elaya Raja. The First Prince at that time was his brother, a great and erudite scholar like him. While the Elaya Raja was a proficient in *Vyākharana*, the First Prince was a specialist in logic and *Vadanta*. That the First Prince had no chance to rule over his subjects, because of his premature death, is one of the saddest misfortunes of our country. Because he was not only a scholar, but also a true, generous patriot with a large heart. He is the hero of my brother's political drama *Firebrand*. My brother was a devoted friend of his; so also were Messrs. Narayana Marar, K. P. Padmanabha Menon and Nallanat Narayana Menon, all whose names are security for plenty of honest independence. Messrs. C. P. Achyutha Menon and V. K. Rama Menon were on the side of the Elaya Raja. The brothers were not pulling on well, and so the First Prince had taken up his residence at Poyya and then at Irinjalakudai.

There was a Malayalam paper, called *Kerala Mitram*, published from Mattancherry, Cochin, by Sri-man Devaji Bheemji, who was an admirer of this scholarly prince. His Highness also liked the Settu. Once I took an article of the Prince, which my brother forwarded to me, to Devaji Bheemji, whom I

secretly honoured for starting an independent Malayalam paper in this State. I believe it was about the first Malayalam newspaper. I very much wanted a life of this patriot and philanthropist to be written after he passed away. For that purpose I made an appeal to the editor of *Kerala Mithram*. In his reply, dated 14-11-1894, he wrote to me that he would do his best to bring out a biography of his late master, but that he feared delay on account of dissensions among the trustees. These acute differences ended in a protracted litigation which I had, as a lawyer, to conduct on behalf of the charitable institutions of Devaji Bhcmji. I had the satisfaction of seeing them all worked under a scheme which I prepared and which the District Court embodied in its decree. Judge Mr. P. Narayana Menon took a very sympathetic interest in the matter.

H. H. Kerala Varma, the First Prince, asked me, through my brother, to live with the Princes in Madras and to supervise their household and to regulate their studies. I wrote back to say that, as we were, more or less, of the same age and were also College mates, it would be presumptuous on my part to accept a work like that. Besides, I was an entire stranger to that sort of work. Above all, I told my brother that that course would surely upset my studies. H. H. the First Prince wanted me to go to him when I came home for the summer recess. He put his case before me with an enthusiasm and with a wealth of argument that I remained silent. As I felt nervous in his great presence, I never attempted to argue with him. I simply said, "Your Highness, all that I have to say on the point, I have written to my brother. But, if, still, Your Highness insists on my performing that duty, I am at your command." Then H. H. smiled and said, "I shall really feel happy if you can help the Princes." So, some time after the reopening of the College, I began to live with them.

It was a cruel wrench to me, to live away from my congenial surroundings. But I bore the burden patiently, and tried to do my duty as efficiently as I could. After a few months, my health began to suffer, and I had to take leave of the Princes, of course with the consent of H. H. the First Prince, who sent me a very gracious letter.

Trichur,-

23rd February, 1892.

"My dear Kunju Krishna Menon,

I gratefully acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st instant together with the diary and time-table to which it gave cover. But it pained me much to learn therefrom that you have been forced to give up your guardianship of the Princes by complaint of your heart. Of course, you have acted very wisely in giving up the charge of our princes. I heartily wish you a thorough recovery from the relapse and hope that it will not repeat. To hear from you that the complaint is of a serious nature has been most unwelcome and sorrowful to us here. However, I hope I may meet you in a much better state of health when we come up there on next Friday morning. The 15th Prince and myself are the "we" you know.

You have noted the diary in a most laudable spirit for which I regret I could not express my thankfulness in adequate terms. In short, what you have done for our princes in Madras is just the same as I could desire. Hence I am inexpressibly sorry at your separation from the princes. I hope the princes will study by rote the first eleven days' diary; I am certain the princes will thereby derive much benefit. There they can read the exact portrait of themselves, which is the chief thing to be studied in one's life, and of course the most difficult. Perhaps, still more so to reconcile with it. The diary bears the signature

of the three princes which augurs well of their future. As you have mentioned in your letter, I too am of opinion that you have well chalked out for them the passage by which they could fearlessly march upwards and certainly attain their object with credit. And let us fully rely upon them that they will not disappoint us.

As to the time-table, four hours for visits in an active Monday morning, though only once a month, seems to me a waste of important time which my brother cannot afford to lose this year. After two months, I hope he will discontinue the practice without further advice being given.

I believe it has been so arranged that, whenever my brother goes out on visit, he will take with him either the 12th or the 16th Prince or both, so that they too may get accustomed to move in society.

On the whole I am convinced, and the princes too I believe are, that you have done yeoman service to them. The Princes too did not disappoint us.

Again accept my thanks coming as they do from the very bottom of my heart for your services to my, as well as your own, princes.

With best wishes,

I am,

Yours very sincerely,

Sd.

(Sd). K. Varma. "

H. H., the First Prince naturally took a prominent part in getting cancelled or at least in rendering inoperative the rules passed by Dewan Tiruvencatachariar for regulating the travelling of the Princes of the Cochin Ruling Family outside the limits of that State. The Princes retained Mr. Eardley Norton to represent their case before H. H. the Maharajah. A few paragraphs, from the memorial he prepared and

submitted will be interesting reading even at this distance of time.

"We, the undersigned members of Your Highness' family, venture, in a spirit of filial reverence, to approach Your Highness with a loyal representation of a matter which—as it seriously affects our personal freedom of action, our feelings of self-respect and our incomes—we implore Your Highness to take into your benign consideration, in order, if it so please Your Highness, to the removal of the recently imposed burdensome restriction we now labour under—never, on pain of fine and other unspecified penalties, in any circumstances, to travel beyond the limits of the State of Cochin without previously obtaining the express permission in writing of either Your Highness or Your Highness' Government. In preferring this humble request, we feel called upon to assure Your Highness that at no time could we possibly wish to proceed to any place whatsoever without Your Highness' knowledge and approval of our movements. We are too sensible of the love we bear, and the duty we owe, Your Highness ever to desire to cross the boundary of the State of Cochin, and locate ourselves elsewhere in opposition to Your Highness' invariably kind and thoughtful judgment on our behalf. Being fully persuaded of Your Highness' wise and conscientious care for our best interests, we cannot contemplate without pain a course of conduct, on our part, which should savour of indifference towards even the very lightest of Your Highness' implied injunctions. But we view the particular injunction of which we differentially complain, with the utmost apprehension as being, in its practical working, likely to prove a barrier to that enlargement of our minds which we owe it to ourselves and to others to endeavour after. By so enlightened a ruler as Your Highness it will at once be conceded that the experience of travel is essential to the attainment of this end

3. These rules owe their birth to circumstances which we will briefly detail. In November 1890, the Second Prince, desiring to visit Madras for the purpose of professionally consulting Dr. Brockman, procured permission for that purpose from Your Highness. His brothers, the Fifth and Seventh Princes, wished to accompany the Second Prince, actuated partly by their common anxiety as to the health of their elder brother; partly by the desire on the part of the Fifth Prince to avail himself of this opportunity for consultation on his own account with an able physician; and partly by the laudable eagerness in which all equally shared to utilise so favourable an occasion for enlarging their views and knowledge by travel outside the limits of their own confined dominions. The two younger Princes notified their wishes to the Dewan, through whose instrumentality the necessary order for their journey was issued and acted upon till they had reached the station of Shoranur, on that side the extreme border of the Cochin State. At the station, the Fifth and Seventh Princes received a private message through the Tasildar of Talapilly forbidding them to proceed further. No valid reason was assigned for this injunction; and at the request and importunity of their beloved mother, who never wished them to live separate, the young Princes continued their journey with the Second Prince to Madras. Whatever else may be said of their conduct, we would press the point that the motive and object of that journey were worthy both of praise and of encouragement. It received neither.

15. Of this letter we will only observe that it displays a lamentable falling off of the spirit of that liberal prudence which characterised the Resident's admonition to the Dewan, to be careful how he applied the new powers of punishment confined to his care; that it does not explain the retrospective exercise of those

powers; and that it evidences some confusion both as to the true operation of the rules themselves, and our protest against them. It will be observed that the Resident's letter declares those rules to be only a re-assertion of the ancient and well-established doctrine of unquestioning submission to the throne. If that doctrine was "pretty well understood", its official republication needed not the redundant *imprimatur* of the Resident. If its previous existence, independent of the rules, were true, its ratification by the Resident was unnecessary. If its wisdom was apparent, the Resident's warning as to its application was superfluous.

21. One word more, and we have done. Our present position is intolerable. The check upon our movements cuts us off from all the advantages that flow from travel and intimacy with affairs outside the orbit of our little world. If the State be seriously imperilled by a journey undertaken without the pomp of a reserved railway carriage and without the circumstances of an official retinue, then the State should at its own cost provide for the maintenance of its threatened ascendancy and injured pride. But we trust Your Highness will not lightly concede the point that the internal prosperity or the external repute of the State of Cochin will run risk of deterioration or decay because Your Memorialists resort to Bangalore for health, unaccompanied by a number of servants; consult a Madras physician without a pair of silver sticks in waiting, or dip into the storehouse of learning under western tuition without the irritating encumbrances of half a dozen *laqueys de place*."

Mr. Thiruvengkata Chari became so unpopular that, when once it was arranged to enact *Sabdarajunam* in his official residence at Ernakulam, the person who was to have played the rôle of the heroine was kidnapped on the way and locked up in a room, and a substitute had to be found at the eleventh hour.

Before I leave this part of my narration, it is just as well that I refer to two or three letters which would show that our living and course of conduct in Madras were appreciated by our elders in Cochin. The first is from Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon, and is dated 21st February, 1892, from Ernakulam.

"My dear Cochaniyan,

You will have known from my reply to your telegram how glad and thankful I was at the news of my brother's success which you had so kindly communicated to me. . . One of the reasons for sending Krishnan to Madras was the Prince's letter and your presence there. Whatever disadvantages there might be in leaving him away from us here, I fully believe that in your company he will be safe in all respects. . . I have been particularly cautioning Krishnan against being led away by fanciful ideas of fashion and such like. I need hardly give you any advice as you have been sufficiently long at the place and without temptation. While being diligent in your studies, take care of your health. Please write to me what on an average will be required for Krishnan's monthly expenses, and I will remit it to you.

Yours affectionately,

(Sd) P. Gopala Menon."

The next is from Mr. Puthenzheth Gopala Menon and is about his nephew, Mr. P. Narayana Menon, who rose, later on, to the position of the Sarvadhikari of the Ruler and to that of the District Magistrate in Cochin.

"I offer you my sincere thanks for your kind telegram announcing my nephew's success at the examination . . . You know with what particular care I have brought him up. Please take charge of th,

boy and guide him through. I know there are influences their for good and also for evil, and without proper guidance a young boy is sure to go wrong."

One or two letters, more or less, connected with subjects not alien to the above will fit in here. One is from Mr. Karakkat Govinda Menon.

"I paid my respects to His Highness (the abdicated Ruler) yesterday, who talked to me for about 8 or 10 minutes. His Highness asked why I came to Madras for my F. A., and I told him that I accompanied a friend of mine who was coming this side about that time. Mr. Sankara Narayana Iyer (Sarvadhikariakkar), who was there by the side of H. H., asked me who that friend was. I mentioned your name. H. H. then said, "I have seen him when he was a boy of 10 or 12. He is very smart, very intelligent," (which H. H. repeated three or four times). Mr. S. N. Iyer endorsed H. H.'s statements by adding that you were his student for some time and that you were one of the brightest boys in the class. . . . If you will kindly give me the necessary references to write it (Kunhampuzha Nambiyar Prize Essay), I shall try my chance after my examination."

The other is from Mr. Kuppakatt Govinda Menon. I got it early in 1896.

"My character had been moulded by you, and whatever knowledge I acquired after coming to Madras was through your agency. . . . I used to speak to them about you with great respect and love which I sincerely possess. Of course I ought to have kept before me while doing so that real greatness needs no praise." Again, in early November of that year, he reverts to this subject. For, on 10-11-1196, I write in my diary "Kupp. G. Menon writes to say that he is afraid to speak scandals, or engage in idle talk, or waste his time, when he is with me. He added, "Many have become my friends simply because they see you treating me as one."

During my time, the Presidency College had a Literary Association and an Historical Association. With the latter I had nothing to do, except that once I was prevailed upon by its Secretary to read a paper before it. My essay on the *Joint Family System* is the outcome of that pressure. But I was intimately connected with the other one. No one could escape it also; for its energetic Secretary, Mr. G. A. Natesan, knew how to rope every student into its fold. Even Governors, Executive Council Members and Judges of the High Court, let alone lawyers and professors and politicians of high repute, he would get either to preside over its meetings or to lecture before them. The students of course had to take their turn and read papers or open debates. I read a paper on Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. Rev. Fr. Kellet of the Christian College, who presided over that meeting, was so pleased with it that he took it with him, revised it and published it in the *Christian College Magazine*. Subsequently, I had the luck to read it before a meeting of the Ernakulam Literary Union over which my revered master presided. He encouraged my further study of Tennyson with many flattering remarks over my attempt. He said he wanted to read it again, and when it was returned to me, he also sent me his copy of the *Life of Tennyson*. Mr. Natesan had also started a manuscript magazine and enlisted a few of us to feed it with articles. My paper on *James Garfield* was first published in it. He was seriously intent on learning to be a writer. He could hardly evade his destiny. His *Indian Review*, it will be no exaggeration to say so, is known all over the civilised world. It is designed with the double purpose of making a fortune and educating its readers by supplying them at a cheap cost with the pabulum of the best quality and suited to all tastes. His publications too are of so varied and excellent a character, and so cheap withal, that they have become so popular as to def-

competition. The friendship that we formed from College has remained unclouded to this day, and the last time I was in Madras I had the happiness of receiving his warm welcome and enjoying his lavish hospitality in his palatial residence at Mylapore.

The Cochinite Union, started on 4-4-1891, was confined to the Cochinites resident in Madras. Practically, its membership covered only students, and it was more or less a literary and debating society. Its meetings were held in the Indiana Villa, the residence of the Cochin Princes in Egmore; and, mainly, because of the connection of H. H. Ravi Varma with it as its President, it made a noise in its day. Every meeting the Prince attended with assiduity and radiated with his almost unparalleled charm. The great social reformer, Mr. Raghunath Rao, Prof. Krishnan and several others have addressed its meetings. But my memory skips on to one particular meeting when Mr. G. Parameswaran Pillay, he was familiarly called G. P. by his friends, was the speaker of the day. His was a fine piece of oratory that kept us all spell-bound for an hour. He proved that, in every way, Cochin and Travancore are one and that it was only an accident that the administration of each was carried on by different individuals. His fervid appeal in his peroration that we should remain as brothers and work for the glory of the sister States did raise a thrill in the hearts of all who heard him that day. G. P. was the Proprietor and Editor of the *Madras Standard*. He carried the work of a great and honest newspaper in a bold and becoming way. He was the master of a prose style that was admired by all. His *Representative Indians* and *London and Paris* show the varieties of diction that were at his command. Once Dr. T. M. Nair and himself went on a pleasure trip from Madras to Cape Comorin by way of Trichur and Trivandrum. G. P. contributed a series of articles entitled *Dan and I*, descriptive of their

journey, which at that time attracted the attention of the intelligent public by its humour and charming style. When he brought the goodwill of the Daily, he came to me and asked for my assistance in canvassing subscribers for it. I got a decent number from the State of Cochin. When I was in Madras, I reviewed the books for that paper. I told him once not to send me the novels that came in legion from the English firms in London, as they made my reading desultory. He once seriously offered to me the post of an assistant Editor. A plunge into journalism! It was tempting. But I strongly resisted the temptation, and, after a month, when I helped him without any pay, I literally slipped out of the office, as the heavy work for the newspaper began to seriously interfere with my studies. It was the time when Mr. Norton's articles on the *Kitten and Kissing Cases*, and about the monosyllabic Honorables, published in the *Standard*, were creating a lively sensation in the social and political world of the Presidency. G. P. introduced me to their writer when he came to the office, which he now and again did. Once he asked me "not to interfere with his commas and full stops; for somehow I have a fascination for them." On another occasion, he said he knew very little of English Grammar. "But if anything went wrong, my ears tell that to me at once." I thought it was treason to touch his articles, even to suggest any change. Mr. Norton, he was a genius. His towering personality overshadowed every one in Madras. There was a marked individuality in his writings the like of which I have not come across anywhere in my reading. His style will attune itself to any gamut, from grave to gay. And his courage was epic. Once, when he was on the Congress platform, moving a resolution,—I believe, about the British waste of Indian money,—an English missionary lady came up and began to abuse him and to hold up his character to ridicule. He

quietly motioned the audience not to disturb her speech, and stood by her side like a graceful Grecian statue. When she concluded her vitriolic diatribe, he resumed his eloquent speech as if nothing had happened there. He excelled in conversation. When he talked, his listeners would never realise the passage of time. He was gifted with the genius to talk. This gift of his and my assiduity to listen brought us the more closer. Once, when I was sitting in mute admiration of his brilliant talk, he turned to me and remarked, "Mr. Krishna Menon, you are a stimulating listener." When I replied that it was a game at which I might claim some ability to play, he came and shook hands with me and said, "You are a clever fellow." "I believe you do not use the word fellow in the sense you used it the other day," I told him. He asked me "What is it? I forget." When a rich man, but one with no high educational qualification, was made a Fellow of the Madras University, Mr. Norton, thus commented on the nomination in his *Olla Podrida* in the *Madras Standard*: "Worth makes the man, the want of it the fellow." "Oh ! no, no, never." He apologetically repeated the words on parting and said "Really I like you. You are clever." How I wish his writings, forensic addresses, and *Reminiscences* in the *Looker-on* could be collected and published in the form of a book. They form a real treasure which contemporary history and English literature could ill afford to lose. I once wrote to him on the subject. Then he wrote to me this letter from Calcutta where he was then practising:

"I have often thought of bringing out a volume of my speeches and writings. But I have been deterred by two considerations: first, whether they would be likely to prove of interest to the public; secondly, how to lay my hands on speeches and writings scattered through the press. As a landmark in the growth of Indian politics and as mile-posts along the road we

have travelled, the speeches ought to be of some value to the enquiring mind. But would they be acceptable to the larger multitude?

If you and other friends think they would be of some value, I should be glad to contribute my mite towards publication. Could you help to collect? The details we could discuss later.

Yours very truly

(Sd) Kerdley Norton. "

I have strayed far away from the Cochinite Union. I shall go back to it for a short while. We used to have combined meetings of this society and of the Travancore Malayali Association in the Pachaiyappa College Hall. Later on, on the 17th of April, 1894, I presided at a meeting of students, representatives from all the colleges in Madras, to consider the feasibility of forming a University Students' Union, and, subsequently, moved a resolution at the public meeting in the Victoria Hall when we formally inaugurated the University Union. I was on its Executive Committee and did work hard to make it a useful institution.

It was in 1892, the second year of my life in the Presidency College, that I chanced to read a notice of Mr. R. C. Dutt's *Ancient India*. I got down the three volumes and read them. There was no useful book like that in Malayalam. So I wrote to the author if he could give me leave to render his work into my mother-tongue. I am glad to note that not only did he readily permit me to do it, but also gave me hints as to how I might do it. That was indeed very kind of him.

"You can certainly undertake a translation." So he wrote to me on 27-6-1892, from Midnapur, where he was the Collector then. "It would be necessary

however to cut down the original to about one-half its original size, or even less, in the translation to make it readable and interesting. A big book is intolerable in translation, and the Bengali translation, now in progress, is being made on this principle.

"And don't try to make the translation literal. Take the facts and ideas from the original and put it in the Malayalam language briefly and clearly and in the manner that would be most acceptable to Malayali readers. That is the only way in which you can hope to secure readers.

"I will enquire in Calcutta if the notices which appeared about my late lamented cousin Miss Toru Dutt have been preserved. Will your paper be in English or in Malayalam?"

On reading a few of the works of Toru Dutt and the remarks of Edmund Gosse about them, I had an idea of writing a paper about her life and works for the benefit of my brothers and sisters of Kerala. The last para is an answer to a request of mine made in that connection. I could not get any help from Calcutta, and so the papers that Mr. Govindan Bhayadram and myself wrote about her were short. With the assistance of Mr. C. Achyutha Menon and one or two of my other friends, I finished the work of translation of Mr. Dutt's very valuable work. After a careful revision by me, Achyutha Menon went through the whole, critically.

Mr. C. Achyutha Menon was a forceful factor in the official arena of Cochin for more than a quarter of a century. He may aptly be called a walking encyclopaedia on matters connected with the history of Cochin. He possessed a powerful and fertile brain, and in English and in Malayalam he was the master of a facile and graceful style which any literary man would be glad to own. He is the author of the *Cochin State Manual*, of the lives of Dewans SankaraWarrier, Sankunni Menon and Govinda Menon, and of many

informing reports. As the Editor of the *Vidya Vinodini* he set a pace and a standard for the conduct of Malayalam monthlies which others have gasped in vain to approach. In his last collegiate year he got the Sri Godavari prize for Sanskrit.

The *Vidya Vinodini* did much to develop prose literature in Malayalam. It encouraged good works and mercilessly criticised bad ones. The Editors created it as one of the centres for focussing the fresh-flowing currents of thought, interest and debate on matters literary. The best writers of the day were its contributors. He offered me, through its publishers, the editorship of that monthly when he retired from that office; and when I expressed a desire that he should continue to conduct it and my doubts as to my capacity for the work, he himself wrote to me and forced me to take it up.

"My dear Anujan,

It is at my instance that Visvam (the head of the firm of Messrs. V. Sundara Iyer & Sons, the well-known Book-sellers and Publishers of Trichur) requested you to take up the Editorship of the *Vidya Vinodini*. While you deluge me with reasons for retaining the Editorship, you do not show cause why you should not yourself take it up. Remembering the arguments you threw at me, you will not I am sure decline the Editorship now that it is offered you. I have some personal reasons for discontinuing my connection with it, which it is not necessary to trouble you with. I hope however you will kindly take it up from this month or Makaram at the latest.

Yours very sincerely,

(Sd) C. Achyutha Menon."

For want of funds I had to wait for some time to bring out the Malayalam rendering of Mr. Dutt's work. H. H. Kerala Varma, B. A., (the present Ruler) who was then studying in Madras, generously



Sri. Kerala Varma Valia Koil Thampuran.

assisted me with a handsome amount, and I dedicated the first edition to him. The printing took a long time, so that it was brought out only in 1894. It became popular at once, and it was prescribed as a textbook for study by a few of the Indian universities. I felt happy when great scholars like the late Valiya Koil Tampuran began to notice it in high complimentary terms. The first two letters I got I shall transcribe here:—

Brindawan,
Bengal,
Dec. 5, 1894.

"Dear Sir,

I have to thank you sincerely for the copy of *Ancient India* (I called it *Prachinarnavartam*) in Malayalam which you have been so good as to send me. I hope the work will obtain a fitting reception in your part of the world. The industry with which you have executed the work and the promptness with which you have brought it out reflect great credit on you. It is the first translation of the work yet published into any of the Indian vernaculars, and I need hardly say, I look upon it with gratification. Believe me,

Yours very truly
(Sd), R. C. Dutt."
Ernakulam,
16th December 1894.

"My dear Kunjikrishnan,

I have received with pleasure your translation of Dutt's *Ancient India*. It is a very large work and its translation must have been an arduous work. However, it has been successfully accomplished, and it is a subject of congratulation that you have been able to do it although engaged at the time in

preparing for the B. A., degree examination.

Yours very truly,

(Sd) T. Govinda Menon "

This is from my Karnavan Dewan Govinda Menon who was then living in honourable retirement next door to my house Kumaralayam. The *Indian Journal of Education* wrote about it as "a highly valuable production, full of suggestions to the scholar and, on the masses, acting like leaven. We have no hesitation in pronouncing the workmanship to be on the whole excellent."

H. H. Valia Koil Tampuran encouraged me with these remarks about it in a letter, dated 4-1-1895.

"I cannot too highly applaud your labours in publishing this account of ancient India, which is alone calculated to give the people of Malabar an insight into the primitive state of our religious and social institutions, and to dispel the crude notions, which have now become crystallized as it were with regard to the history and creed of our forefathers. I most heartily congratulate you on your having taken the initiative in creating an interest in our countrymen in researches of this nature to which their attention has now been drawn for the first time. You have succeeded in your highly laudable undertaking. The style you have adopted is all that could be desired."

Mr. Dutt used to write to me now and again, and we met at Ernakulam when he came to South India on a visit. He ought to have been a Governor; but, he had to retire as the Commissioner of Orissa. On reading a few of the reviews of the rendering of his *Ancient India*, he wrote to me towards the close of 1895 this letter:

"I am now in Cuttack, (Comr. of Orissa) adjoining your Presidency. It is indeed a pleasure to me to read the reviews of your rendering of *Ancient India*. You have done a service to your mother-tongue.

Don't mind hostile criticisms, and don't reply to them. Unfair criticism dies out, while a work like yours will live to do its work in spreading knowledge and dispelling superstition and ignorance.

"A new edition of my *Literature of Bengal* will be out within a week, and I am writing to my printers to send you a copy as soon as the book is out. I am glad my "*Rambles*" pleased you. The *Three years in Europe* is sketchy as you say, but the new edition which is in the press will perhaps be an improvement.

"Many thanks for your congratulations. Mr. P. N. Bose for whom you are writing an account of your literature is, you will be glad to know, if you do not know it already, my son-in-law.

"I have great pleasure in sending you a photo of mine by this post registered.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd) R. C. Dutt.

About the short sketch of Malayalam Literature that I wrote at the instance of Mr. Dutt, H. H. Valia Koil Thampuran was pleased to say that "a lay reader will hardly miss in it any information he may wish to have concerning Malayalam Literature." This sketch was sent to Mr. V. Nagamaiya, a Dewan Peishcar of Travancore, as desired by him, when he was writing the *Travancore State Manual*. It also served a *South Indian Encyclopaedia* and the *History of Kerala*. This is Mr. Nagamaiya's letter on the subject.

Camp, Quilon.
25th Feb. 1902.

My dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

I have perused, with much pleasure, your paper on "Malayalam Literature." I will use it in an abbreviated form. I shall be much obliged if you will send me any other papers prepared by you or in

your possession, bearing on the country, its people and laws, which might be of service to me.

Yours sincerely

(Sd) V. Nagamaiya.

Once before, while in the Senior F. A., class, I had tried my apprentice hand at the work of translation. I thought a booklet on *The Hints of Training Native Children* by Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao would be useful to the ladies of Kerala. When written to for leave to translate it, he replied he had "no objection whatever" in my translating the book. He characteristically added, "My authorship may be mentioned if it would increase the usefulness of the brochure." In collaboration with Mr. Palliyil Krishna Menon I translated it, and H. H. Kerala Varma, the First Prince, graciously wrote a very encouraging introductory note on to it. He specially referred to the easy, chaste and graceful language we have used. I believe this and my *Chandranasa* have already gone to several editions.

I had a hand in revising and editing my sister's drama, *Subhadrajanam*, and in getting it prescribed as a book for study for a University examination. Even when it was in the making, she used to show me portions when finished; and I would trouble her to make and remake *slokams* until they came up to my expectation. Mr. Karakkad Govinda Menon also would join me in this preliminary work. He had a fine literary taste though not much of the critical acumen.

Over and above the indigenous *Kathakali*, the theatres of Kerala began, about this time, to stage the dramas of Bhavabhuti and Kalidasa, and even plays composed by living poets. This tendency received a stimulus from Mr. Narayana Pillai, a gifted actor, who toured all through Kerala with a troupe of clever

new plays and the rendering of classic dramas in Sanskrit into Malayalam by the well-known poets of Malabar. This by sheer chance created a curious situation in Trichur, which developed into a storm centre. Parties were ranged into two sides, one headed by Mr. Champathil Chathukutty Mannattiar and the other led by Mr. C. Achyutha Menon. Even criminations and recriminations of a not wholesome character, though couched in verse, were freely exchanged. When, for the summer recess of 1892, I went to Trichur, there were two theatres running. One of it had on its boards the *Uttararamacharitham* translated by Mr. Mannattiar, and the other another translation of it, somewhat hastily got through, by a number of poets under the guidance of Mr. C. Achyutha Menon. With me had come from Madras Messrs. Krishnan Pandalai, G. Sankara Pillai, son of Judge Govinda Pillai, and who, like his father, rose to the Travancore High Court Bench, Raman Pillai, Sub-Editor of the *Madras Standard* and Big Achu. All these were with me as the guests of my brother. The day we reached Trichur, that is on the 7th May, we all went to Mr. Mannattiar's play, because it was patronised by Mr. Narayana Marar and my brother. Next day, we went to the other one where we met Messrs. C. Achyutha Menon, V. K. Sankara Menon, Kundur Narayana Menon and others, and had, between the scenes, pleasant talks with them. Mr. Mannattiar interested me in critically reading both the translations with the original. For this study he would come to me, every night, on his way to his wife's house. We got through it in about a fortnights' time. To me it was interesting and really instructive work, and I enjoyed it very much; only my mother was sorry, because, my stay with her at Ernakulam had by this to be necessarily curtailed. After going through the two renderings, I found Mr. Mannattiar's translation

prompted by Mr. Mannattiar to write a comparative criticism of the two in the columns of the *Kerala Patrika*. As the authorship was kept a secret, I was able to enjoy the humour of the situation, and chide both sides for their childish behaviour.

Mr. Pandalai was then not only strong in Chemistry, but also in literature. He also took an interest in introducing modern scientific works into the Malayalam language. To this end, he got leave, through Prof. Reid of Travancore, from the Macmillan Company the right to translate their *Science Primers* into Malayalam, and he himself undertook the translation of the *Chemistry Primer*. This translation he wanted me to revise which I did with pleasure. I also assisted him in getting it through the press. On its publication, he gave a dinner to three or four of us. He himself prepared the dishes, that was another charm about it, and I used to say that the Jagardar of Arni should be induced to institute another medal to be presented to Chemistry medallists when they turned out to be excellent cooks as well.

I did not neglect my general reading. Mr. Bilderbeck insisted on our reading a few novels of Scott selected by him. Among the books, besides these, that I read in 1891 and 1892, Huxley's *Lay Sermons*, Sir Amir Ali's *Spirit of Islam*, *Life of Keshub Chunder Sen*, Layard's *Nineveh*, a few works of George Eliot, Ruskin and J. De Quincey, poems of Toru Dutt, Spencer's *First Principles* and Leslie Stephen's *Hours in a Library*, find prominent mention.

For Scott's novels I went to the Dewan (G. M.), for I had seen two sets in the library which were formerly owned by his brother, Dewan Sankunni Menon. He asked me to dust the books and list them before I took the books I wanted. Then I took only four novels from the smaller edition. When, later on, Mr. Kochu Kutta Menon became the Karnavan, I got him to give a number of these books to the Ernakulam

Public Library. At that time, I took for myself a book on the History of the United States called *Our First Century* and the two volumes of Dean Farrar's *Life of Christ*, which were sumptuously bound in alligator's skin and which Dewan Sankunni Menon got as a birthday present from Mr. Sealy's father.

As a rule, I never used to be content with studying the text-books alone. I always tried to read works connected with them. What I mean is this: If I had to learn a poem of Tennyson for my examination, I read other poems too and also the life of the poet. In the same way in Chemistry; I even purchased two or three costly works on the subject. The College Library was a particularly inviting one, and the Library Peon had a partiality for me and always gave me a smiling salami. During the College hours, when I was disengaged, I would be either in the library or in the laboratory. On certain Saturdays or Sundays, I would go to the Adyar Library where Mr. R. Anantha Krishna Sastri was then the Librarian. To him, Mr. K. P. Sankara Menon gave me a note of introduction; and thus Sastri and myself became friends. We still are, and every year we meet at Ooty, and I find time to spend some pleasant and profitable hours in his company. He is an enthusiast in the collection of manuscripts with which he has enriched many an institution in this great peninsula. Mr. Sankara Menon always treated me as a brother of his, and, while I was at Madras, he insisted on my going to him once a week. Once his wife became so seriously ill that I had to stop with him, both day and night, for half a dozen days. The way I behaved in those days made him remark to his brother one day, "Padmanabha, Aniyar should be a doctor, for God has blessed him with the milk of human kindness in an uncommon degree."

Early in 1892, two of our friends had to leave us. Ramakrishna Pillai, Elayadath Narayana Menon and Kochunni Menon were ploughed in their examinations. Ramakrishna Pillai went home. He later on passed some law examination in Travancore and, the last time I saw him, he was practising in the Vycome Munsiff's Court. He looked a disappointed man and had a look of deep melancholy about him. My attempt to cheer him up had no lasting effect on him. One day he made himself scarce, and his whereabouts were not known to any one afterwards. In him I lost a true friend of mine. Narayana Menon diverted his steps to Poona to study Forestry there.

Before he left Madras, I was able to satisfy his great desire to attend the University Convocation. For I was able to secure two tickets, one of which I gave to him and the other to Karakadi Paramu Menon who had come to get a new set of teeth for him. He was staying with us, and I had to escort him to the dentist. Mr. Menon had doubts as to whether he could bite hard things with his new teeth. I informed Dr. Gould about this. He was a man with a fund of humour. He told me, in his patient's hearing, "No, no, I have not finished with him. I have to examine the teeth myself, after I blindfold your friend." Paramu Menon took him seriously; the Doctor covered Mr. Paramu Menon's eyes with an handkerchief and then into his open mouth, he introduced an iron rod, and asked Mr. Paramu Menon to bite on it as hard as he could. We all had a hearty laugh over it.

Mr. Kochunni Menon was asked by his uncle Mr. Rama Menon to go back to Trichur, and try to enter service, as he could not afford to keep him there. I felt sorry for them; so I went and told the Princes about this and prayed for help. They generously promised to pay him Rs. 15 per mensem. Occasionally I also helped them; and, once, when Rama Menon found difficulty to meet an urgent demand, I sold my

gown and gave him the price I got. Mr. Kochunni Menon never cared to remember all that; but Mr. Rama Menon did not forget the help he had then from me to the close of his life. Soon after the death of my brother, he wrote to me a very touching letter, in which he made a reference to this.

"Mr. dear Aniyar,

I have been wanting for the last so many days to tell you that, if you ever find yourself short of cash hereafter, you may draw on me and meet your requirements; but I have been detained by doing so only by a feeling of delicacy. After due consideration however, I am of opinion that it is better for you and me—especially for me—to speak out my mind once for all.

When I was in trouble some years ago, you stood by me and it is therefore only my duty as a man to stand by you and share your sorrows and your burden when you, in your turn, are in trouble. That is clearly my duty. As for my inclination, I should deem it a high privilege to be able to be of any use to you and to yours.

It is my curse that I can't make up my mind to express all that I feel. I am very shy and undemonstrative and therefore people think that I can't and don't feel. From certain expressions you used in one of your letters to me last year, I am led to think that you share with others the same opinion of me. I am sorry to learn that you, after so many years of close intimacy with me, should think so unkindly of me. But that does not matter. Hereafter, know that I include you and yours among my nearest and dearest; and whenever I seem otherwise, kindly remind me of this letter.

Apart from sentiment, if you want money, kindly let me know how much you want and when.

I am,
Yours affectionately,
(Sd). K. Rama Menon.

Fortunately, I had no financial trouble then, and so I had on no occasion to take any money from Mr. Rama Menon. By the grace of God, up till now, only on two occasions I had to borrow money; once, soon after the death of my mother, and next when my son was in England; and I had to do it because those who had promised money pleaded excuse at the nick of time. To that I may have to advert in its proper place.

My College Days. III.—

Days in the Law College.

The fear of a defeat went home to my heart. My vision of a medical career dissolved itself and went out of my view. I did not know what to do. I appealed to my brother for guidance. His reply was characteristic of his good self.

"I need not be told that it will not be your fault if you don't scrape through the optional branch this year; for your past successes bear ample testimony as to your intelligence and perseverance. What I disapprove of in you is your inability to cope with reverses. Let *nil desperandum* be your motto as it is mine. . . . As to the choice of a profession, I don't want to force you to like any in particular. If you like medicine, take it up. Pray, when you write to uncle (Dewan G. M.) or to anybody else, don't you do so in that broken-hearted strain you have been writing to me. Do behave like a man, and not like a child. So long as I have funds, you may rest assured you shall not feel the want of money."

Just to divert my thoughts from an impending calamity, Appu Menon and myself went to Pondicherry on a short visit, early in February 1893, when we were waiting for our results. We found it to be a neat town. We went round to see it; also a certain mill and the statue of Duplex. The sight of the artesian wells was novel to us, and a bath in the gushing

warm waters of one of them was an exhilarating experience. An evening walk on the beach, where the *shik* of the town gathered, concluded our visit.

Towards the close of that February (1894), the B.A. results were published. But, before I could make up my mind as to my future studies, I got a telegraphic message to start for Ernakulam, as my mother was suffering from small-pox. Before I started, I took directions from Dr. M. C. Koman as to what I could do to relieve her from pain and irritation during the progress of the disease. Dr. Koman and myself were intimate friends. For the consultations I had with him, even for the medicines he had given me, he refused to accept a single pie from me. Once, when I wanted to pay for his conveyance, he said, "Mr. Krishna Menon, please don't insult our friendship." He had an extensive practice; the rich and the poor flocked to him, for he was such a clever physician and such a generous and kind man. For a fortnight I was in Ernakulam attending on my mother along with my eldest sister and elder brother. It was a very serious attack and, at one time, when for three consecutive days she was unconscious, we gave up all hopes. On those three days, I had also to busy myself with the feeding of the poor in the family compound and of the cattle of the town in the Durbar Hall grounds. Finally, to our great relief, she pulled through. After her bath, I retraced my steps to Madras.

In the meanwhile, my revered master and my brother had decided that I should qualify myself for the legal profession. The Dewan also was of that opinion, and asked me to write to Appu Menon to know if it was late to seek admission into the Law College. How I hoped it would be, as I never wanted to take up law studies. But it turned up otherwise, for Appu Menon wired "got admission and one week's leave."

If I could not be a doctor, I wanted to be a teacher. To turn out to be an ideal teacher will be an

achievement. To how many students he can make himself useful; the pupils that pass through his hands he can mould into noble persons. The examples of Gopal Rao, Gokhale and of my master stimulated me in my resolve. So, to study for my M. A., I bought three or four books. But Chemistry, Law and M. A. studies, all these three together, I found too taxing to be continued. So I had to give up the last.

It was the reappearance of my old complaint, palpitation of the heart, that finally forced me to come to that decision. Dr. Koman took me to Dr. Smythe. He said that the organ was sound, and the immediate cause of the trouble might be due to nervous weakness. He gave me a prescription. One incident of the visit to him I distinctly remember. Brother had given me an old favourite watch of his, one of a Roscof patent, somewhat large and not by any means light. It had a history behind it. When once my brother was inspecting the Karivannoor bridge, this watch fell into the river below. It was recovered only after an hour's search, when it was still going, as if it had not had a headlong plunge into the river from a height of about fifteen feet. Dr. Smythe chanced to see this watch with me, and said with a smile, "Now I see the cause of the palpitation; we don't go about with a time-piece for a watch." Subsequently, I was advised by my friends to consult Dr. Branfoot. Though he was pictured to me as a morose and taciturn sort of man, he received me kindly, and examined me carefully. When he saw me reading his prescription, he asked me "Do you want a lady's prescription?" I told him I did not know what he meant. "This one may not be sweet and tasty," he said. "I can drink any medicine you give me, provided I can get rid of this disease," I replied. His fee for a consultation was Rs. 15, which I placed on his table. "You are a student. So you can take 10 back." I thanked him and came away.

This medicine gave me much relief, and I began to pursue the even tenor of my college days. The classes of the Law College were held either in the Senate House or in the Presidency College from 8 to 9 in the morning and 6 to 7 in the evening. They never interfered with my Chemistry lectures and work in the laboratory.

Mr. Ramachandra Rao Sahib, Mr. Krishnaswami Iyer, Mr. P. S. Sivaswami Iyer and Mr. Nelson were the outstanding legal luminaries who guided law studies in those days. Mr. Nelson was also the Principal of the Law College. He was very methodical and kept to the course of studies faithfully. A student cannot afford to miss his class. He took great pains in preparing his lectures, so much so that these were afterwards published as text-books for Law studies; and very good books they were. Mr. Sivaswami Iyer and Mr. Krishnaswami Iyer were eminent, practising lawyers; they were knighted afterwards, and were appointed as members of the Executive Council of H. E. the Governor of Madras. Mr. Krishnaswami spoke with a terrific speed, while Mr. Sivaswami Iyer weighed his words and permitted students to clear their doubts. I found Sahib's lectures most interesting and enjoyable. A handsome magnanimous presence he had, appropriate to a great jurist, and his diamond ring scintillated even into the dark corners of the Paya-bhaga system of inheritance. No one was more forthcoming or readier to give his best. He had in abundance that quality of a cool, clear wisdom which put even tangled points in a new light. It was a sight to see and one to be enjoyed to see him putting students with unsuspected questions in an awkward situation. He made no bid for popularity nor indulged in demagogic arts, but lived in perfect contentment in the midst of his devoted friends, among whom Prince Ravi Varma was one.

With one among the Professors of the Law College,

I have kept myself in touch in my after years. I had a veneration for Sir Sivaswamy Iyer. He was a great man, great as a lawyer, scholar and liberal statesman. His wide outlook, long experience, knowledge and scholarship he used for the service of his country. We used to meet at Ooty for several years, and, during our walks, I used to be benefitted by his enlightening talks. On certain important subjects that affected Cochin, I sought his counsel; and his impartial analysis and the ice-pack of his close, clear reasoning fortified me not a little. He could easily detect the centre of gravity in any difficult situation.

In my collegiate career, this (1894) was about the only year in which I had to work very hard. I had the law classes both morning and evenings; in between them, I had the Chemistry lectures and the laboratory work in the Presidency College. The law books took a lot of my time: even then, I could not get through the *Contract Act* in due time, and I had to be assisted by Mr. Krishnan Pandalar to finish it before the F. L. examination. In spite of it all, I did not give up my sports, my general reading or my other activities, as a few of these entries in my diary would indicate:

"1894 Jan. 1. Attended the open air meeting where Mrs. Annie Besant spoke about "India and her mission to the world." I have never heard a more fluent speaker than her, none more graceful.

In passing, let me remark that she and Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri are two of the best speakers I have heard. Their silvery voice, effortless yet forcible eloquence will keep any one exhained. They knew when to stop. That is a great gift. Sastri was never a theosophist nor a colleague in the political field where Mrs. Besant laboured. Yet he has recorded his great admiration for her in these lines: "A great woman, a strong woman, a beneficent-minded woman. A mine of energy and with a wonderful library within herself of all sorts of knowledge. A great fountain of inspiration.

I have never seen another person either of her magnitude or of her singular devotion of spirit. To work and to work of a high and exalted standard, she gave all of her wonderful equipment. And she achieved peaks of greatness in many lines of human activities." It was one of my blessings in life to have seen a small glimpse of her, for a small second in a small sphere. Of this, in its proper place I shall speak.

"Jan. 29. Went to see the cricket match between the Central and Presidency Colleges. The former team played very neatly. * May 24. For the last four days, I have been engaged in arranging the books of the local (Trichur) library. The librarian wanted my help to arrange them in accordance with the arrangement followed in the catalogue prepared by me at the instance of my brother. * May 31. Had an accident in the backwaters on my way to Ernakulam. Suddenly a squall arose as I was settling myself down to sleep and a quantity of water got into the boat. Seeing the two boatmen jump into the water, I prepared to follow them. But they assured me that they would soon take the boat to a shed we could dimly sight at a distance. From 11 P. M. to 3 A. M. I had to pass my time in that boat shed where others also joined us. We lighted a fire and warmed ourselves and talked. After handsomely paying my boatmen, I came in a boat manned by seven Kudampi oarsmen, and thus reached Ernakulam by 7 in the morning. * Aug. 15. Gave my notes on Kalidasa's *Sakuntala* to Karakadit Govindan to enable him to write an essay on that drama. * Nov. 5. Set a paper for the third senior at the request of my master, Mr. Munshi Krishnan. Wrote for H. H. Kerala Varma an abstract and a criticism of the *Bride of Lismore*, one of Scott's novels I like best. * Nov. 17. Wrote to the Editors of the *Malayala Manorama* and *Kerala Mithram* to stop the papers they are kindly sending me. For this reason: some have taken a fancy to circulate the false

news that all sensational articles in them are written by me! Only the low scandal-mongers say so, and only men of their ilk believe them. But I want to avoid even these reports, if possible. For my part, my pen is stainless, I know. I have not written one single line in any paper about the private conduct of any one. To do it is unholy, I know. * Nov. 21. Went to Erode to escort my elder sister and her daughter Ammini to Madras. Ammini is coming for her Lower Secondary Examination. * Dec. 3. Wrote an analysis of Scene 2 of Richard III for Vazhiyil Kunhunni Menon. I take a delight in helping friends."

About the accident referred to in the extract from my diary, I received a humorous note from Mr. Rama Menon.

Trichur,
8th June 1894.

My dear Anjyan,

Your note reached me yesterday; and before writing another word, I must thank you for it. Your sudden and somewhat mysterious disappearance had caused a great deal of uneasiness in our little circle here. You had never, it is true, told us that you were intimate with the good folk of the nether world; but we argued neither you had ever said anything to the contrary. Thus, we had made up our minds logically to conclude that you had been transported by a fairy when the post peon put into my hand a cover which had the unmistakable impress of a human hand. I opened it and found it was yours! I could not at first make up my mind where to begin—whether at the beginning or at the end,—so eager was I to know what you had to tell us from the comfortable region in which, we were sure, you had fixed your new domicile. After a great deal of deliberation, I determined to begin at the very beginning, not without a secret hope that, by doing so, I might be able to find

out where you dated your letter from. The rest you know as you wrote the letter. Your account of the accident on the backwater began to be read with very great haste and anxiety; but, when some one among us (wise soul!) suggested that, if you had been drowned on the way, you could not have possibly dated that letter from Ernakulam, the speed was lessened and the anxiety removed. You must however allow me to say that all the sympathy I could carry to the situation could not prevent my sense of humour from being tickled. What a droll situation for a Bachelor of Arts of the Madras University to be in!—mated with boatmen and soaked to the very marrow of the bone, shivering and having had to swim for your life, to pass the night in a miserable boatshed. Misery acquaints us with strange bed-fellows!

This reminds me of the present state of our weather. It is anything but pleasant. The good God of rain has opened all his taps and it has been raining here in torrents for the last four days and nights. We have had no tennis and no cricket, and I have made up my mind to have no more baths, till the weather should clear up. My studies are progressing, though not at the rate I could have wished for. All of us are in excellent health and wish to hear the same good account from you.

Ever yours affectionately,

(Sd) K. Rama Menon.

I took my B. A. Degree in 1894. In 1895, I passed F. L. It was Mr. Kottilil Kochu Govinda Marar who came to me at about 9 at night and cried out from the gate of the Lily Lodge "Anivan—Passed." That announcement of the F. L. result I distinctly remember; for I then actually realised that I was relieved of a heavy burden. Though, as a rule, I insisted on going to bed by nine, and never liked to be denied my full share of my sleep, that night we talked

till the early hours of morning. Mr. Marar was a brother of my master and owned a few of his best qualities. We were intimate friends and nothing came between us strong enough to break the brotherly bond that united us. He was a man of wide reading and a patriot who loved his country and respected its rulers. He held considered views on all important subjects, and was a good talker and graceful writer.

I considered myself lucky in getting a pass in my P. L. test, when I saw the list of the unsuccessful candidates of that year. Even Mr. Appu Menon and Mr. P. Govindan Thampi were in this list, though they were diligent in their studies and had only F. L. to look to. After I got through my B. A., I began to pay more attention to my legal studies. I devoted a good deal of time to read standard works on the subjects prescribed for the F. L. and the B. L. examinations. I also paid attention to law reports, both English and Indian.

Mr. Govindan Thampi was a descendant of the famous Kunbi Krishna Menon Sarvathi and came from a respectable family in Nattawarampu in the Mukundapuram Taluk. He was a great friend of Mr. Krishnan Pandalai in those days. He was for some time the Manager in the Office of the *Madras Standard*, and, subsequently, took up service in the Police Department of the Travancore Government. He had married a sister of Mr. Kaimakulangara Achyutha Menon. He retired as a District Superintendent of Police. He had a cosmopolitan development, at once plastic and intelligent. While in the Law College, he coached me in cycling on the road in front of the Ordinance Lines in that Park where now the Victoria Hostel stands. He taught me so nicely and gave me the needed hints to be observed in the art that though, before I left it, I had pedalled many miles, I had no fall and had no accidents whatever. After I got a firm seat and knew how to steer the machine, he took

me for rides of varying speed on the Marina road. But, after that, I gave up cycling, as I had no machine of mine own. However, even after an year or two, on those days when that road used to be crowded by pedestrians and vehicular traffic on account of the presence of Swami Vivekananda in the Ice House on the beach, I could easily manage a cycle with perfect composure and safety.

It was early in 1897 that, on his return from the United States, Swamiji came to Madras. He was given a rousing reception. The whole town was astir to welcome that great spiritual hero. I had by that time read the classic address he had delivered before the Parliament of Religions at Chicago. I attended his lectures and talks in Madras. The talks were in the mornings. After his bath and prayers, he would come to the raised seat that was prepared for him in the spacious pandal in the precincts of the Ice House. The pandal could easily accommodate 3000 people. And yet, unless one went early, one could not have got a seat there. All had to sit on the floor. But, from the moment the Swami appeared till the time he retired, one could not have been conscious of any sort of personal discomforts. I was not. What a great presence ! He wore an olive-coloured garh from neck to foot. His massive head and his piercing eyes were all that you saw. He answered questions propounded by any one in the audience, or discoursed on various topics. People sat enthralled by the exquisite beauty of the flow of his words, the sublimity of his thoughts, and the glow of his patriotism. One morning, two missionary ladies were present. They asked him why the pictures of Sri Rama and Sri Krishna were coloured blue. In reply, he asked them, "What is the colour of the endless sea, of the limitless sky? Can you suggest a more appropriate colour, please?" That silenced them, and made their faces look small. Then they tried to express contempt in the use of images

for worship by the Hindus. Their disparaging words roused him to give a vigorous defence for symbolism. "Dear ladies, it is not Hindus alone who worship images. Every religion except Protestantism and Mohammedanism encourage image-worship. Because of this, Protestantism is gradually nearing Agnosticism; and the followers of Islam escape this fate probably by their worship of saints. By his constant inveighing against a personal god, Buddha is responsible, as if by an irony of fate, for the introduction of temples. Images are needed for the development of the divine idea in man. By our mental constitution, we have to associate our ideas of infinity with the image of the blue sky, or of the sea. In the same way, we connect our ideas of holiness with the image of a church, a mosque or a cross. The Hindus have associated the ideas of holiness, truth, purity, omnipresence with certain forms and images." He did not stop there; he continued. "But Hindus did not devote their whole lives to their idols; to them religion never meant an intellectual assent to certain doctrines. Hinduism centres round realisation. Man is to become divine by realising the divine. Idols and temples are only the supports for his spiritual childhood. Material worship is the lowest stage; mental prayer is the next; the highest stage is when the eternal, universal soul has been realised. Please remember, even when the Hindu devotee is before the idol, he prays to the God that cannot be expressed by words or in other ways. Thus image-worship is a stage in the progress of spiritual life."

A few sentences of his in his reply to the address of welcome presented to him by the public of Madras still make echo in my ears. "Though whirlwind after whirlwind of foreign invasion has passed over the devoted head of India, though centuries of neglect on our part and contempt on the part of our conquerors have visibly dimmed the glories of ancient Aryavārtha,

though many a stately column, and many a marvellous corner have been washed away by the inundations that have deluged the land for centuries—yet the centre remains sound, the keystone is unimpaired; the spiritual foundation upon which the noble edifice of glory to God and charity to all beings has been reared stands unshaken, strong as ever. . . . India will be raised not with the power of the flesh, but the power of the spirit; not with the flag of destruction, but with the flag of peace and love, the garb of the sanyasin; not by the power of wealth, but by the power of the begging-bowl. Say not that you are weak. The spirit is omnipotent."

On 4-1-1895, I got the certificate from the Principal of the Law College to show that I had completed my course of B. L. studies. All the class examinations too I had passed by that time. But I could not appear for my examination that year, as both my general health and my eye sight were very weak. 1895 was a strenuous year for me. Even during the summer recess of 1895, I worked hard so as to enable me to complete my course and to pass the necessary tests before I could get the certificate and appear for the final examination. My diary records that my study hours then were 4 to 6 A. M.; 7.30 to 9.30 A. M.; 12 to 2.30 P. M.; 3 to 4.30 P. M. and 7 to 8 P. M.—that is nine hours daily. But this represents only a part of my work. That other activities also claimed my time will be seen from the following extracts from my diary.

"1-5-1895. Kodungallur Cheria Kochunni Thampuran who is treating me for my swelling on the right leg recited the whole of his *Kanthal-Vratham* to me, a nice, small poetical treatise of his on Sanskrit metres. It is an excellent work. Each verse, a gem in itself, is an example of the metre it treats about.

• 2-5-1895. To-day the Thampuran was kind enough to talk to me about the figures of speech, and their place in Sanskrit literature. He also recited and explained a few *shlokas* from his *Kolla-Varsham*, a remarkable poem on the several months of a Malabar year. Only when he explained to me was I able to understand the full import of the verses and to appreciate their beauties. • 11-5-1895. Wrote to my friend, Mr. C. Karyanakara Menon, the Sub-Editor of the *Hindu*, to kindly press the claims of Mr. Pallyil Gopala Menon, for the post of the Superintendent of Police in Cochin. • 24-5-1895. Mr. Kundar Narayana Menon read out to me the first and third acts of his rendering *Mahatiracharitam*. I did not find it so nice as his translation of *Malatikagvintitram*. Further, I told him that the drama has been translated by another at my suggestion. • 30-5-1895. Mr. M. Sankara Menon sends me his prose translation of *Jahans Caesar* for "careful revision." That is a hard job; I have already another work on hand, a story on the "Evils of Procrastination", sent to me by Mr. Muliyl Krishnan. He wants me to "remove all the blemishes before it is returned" to him. I do not know how to find time for all this sort of work. Nor do I know the art of diplomatically disobliging my friends. • 16-6-1895. Before a public meeting held under the auspices of the Trichur Literary Union, I gave a talk on Abraham Lincoln. This is the first time that I deliver an address without the help of notes even. "It was an admirable success," said Raman. • 26-6-1895. Spoke before the Ernakulam Literary Union on "Forn Dutt and her works." No one in the audience had read her writings, while many had not even heard of her name. So the members were glad to hear some of her poems and what Edmund Gosse had written about them. • 10-7-1895. Visited a traveller who has come to Ernakulam. His name is Prince Joseph Nouri. He is a D. A. and L. L. D. It

seems he has discovered the Noah's Ark and the Blue Mountains. He showed me articles written about him and his discoveries in *Pall Mall Budget* and *Gazette* and *California Examiner*. We had a long and interesting and to me instructive talk. * 23-7-1896. The Secretary of the C. M. S. High School, Trichur, has sent me a letter of thanks for the assistance I gave him in the selection of books for the library. * 24-7-1896. As desired by my brother, I inspected the *Balapathasala* at Veliyannur. It is conducted under his supervision and at his expense. There are four classes in it; Malayalam, Sanskrit Arithmetic and Music are taught there. A general idea of the History and Geography of Cochin is given to the pupils. I found the girls of the highest class very smart and intelligent. I have promised to give a prize to the girl in the highest class who tops the list in Malayalam on taking the class marks and examination marks into account."

Among the books I read in 1895, I find mention of Prof. Raleigh's *Origin and Growth of Novel*, Elia's *A Naturalist on the Prowl and Behind the Bungalow*, Burns by Carlyle, Burns' works, Boswell's *Tour to Hebrides*, and Father Chiniquy's *Fifty years in the Church of Rome*. Mr. O. Chanda Menon was pleased to send me a copy of his sumptuous edition of Valiya Koil Tampuran's *Mayura Sandesam*. The author himself honoured me with a copy of it, while his nephew Prof. A. R. Rajaraja Varma sent me his rendering of the *Megha Dathu*. These are my favourite poems, both of them.

By way of relaxation, Ramu Menon, Kochunni Menon and myself visited the Palapilly Teak Plantations on the invitation of Mr. E. Narayana Menon who was, in 1895, in charge of it. We spent two days with him. His bungalow is in a quiet, secluded spot, an ideal place for reading and writing. There is a rivulet close by which adds to the charm of the

scenery. One day, with Kopparambil Kunhi Krishnan Nambiyār, we went out for shooting game. Luckily, he could get no animal to be killed. But the ramble was to my liking. One of the glens over which we rambled was of tempting sylvan beauty fit for a poet's theme or a painter's brush. The air was balmy; and many a tuneful throat made melody to God. Some of the lovely stretches of rural arcas in Cochin have an abiding charm for me. Nothing pleases me more than a sojourn, with a favourite author or a congenial friend, in one of these beauty spots "in hill and dale, by lake or tarn, or within the sound of the breakers on rock or shore", where I can seek relief in sweet summer season from toil and care, where by repose and exercise, I can refresh fading energies and beget new hopes.

After my return to Madras, as far as I could hold on to my studies, I worked well. But when it was found that my health would not permit me to stay in Madras, I returned, early in 1896, to my native place, where I was advised by both English and Indian doctors to take complete rest for a few months so as to recoup my health. Thus, till I went to Madras towards the close of June to renew my studies, I spent my time mainly in Ernakulam, Trichur and Chowarah, with occasional visits to other places on business, pleasure or antiquarian research work.

"1896—15 Feb. Got a letter from Mr. K. Verghese Mappillay, Editor of the *Malayala Manorama*, inviting me to visit Kottayam. This is the third time that he writes to me to do so. So I propose to start thither tomorrow after breakfast. Fortunately, Mr. P. Rammunni Menon, a brother-in-law of Mr. Neelacantha Pillai, a leading lawyer of Alleppey, is also coming with me. He is distantly related to me. • 16th Feb. Reached Vycome in the evening. Went out to see my friends Mr. C. Ramakrishna Pillai and his brother-in-law Mr. P. R. Madhavan Pillai. They were

not at home. After worship in the temple, and an indifferent supper, got into the boat. * 17th Feb. Reached Alleppey. It is a commercial town, and looked cleaner than Vycome. Mr. Raminunni Menon and his brother Nannu Menon were asked by Mr. Neelacantha Pillai to take me round in his carriage and to look after my comforts. Went to see the beach and visited other places of interest. Had worship in a temple. * 18th Feb. Gave a sitting to Mr. Nannu Menon, who is a photographer. Read the whole of Mr. Ramakrishna's *Village Life in South India*. At night, started to Kottayam. The Vembanat Lake behaved to me very generously. * 19th Feb. Reached Kottayam early morning. Mr. Verghese is the very type of a gentleman. He looked to every convenience of mine. It seems Mr. C. Krishna Pillai, Inspector of Schools, had insisted on Mr. Verghese accommodating me in his residence. He has left a nice letter with his son, Parameswaran Pillai, to say that he was forced to go on an urgent work, but that I could make his house my own. His son looked after me very well. In the evening, attended the Valia Koil Thampuram Memorial Medal meeting and moved the important resolution. Drove round the town which looks like Trichur. * 20th Feb. Practically, Mr. Verghese Mappillay was with me the whole day. Our talk mainly centred on Malayalam literature. He is about to start a monthly, and he wants me to edit it with him. Of course, I requested him to kindly excuse me as my hands are otherwise full. Mr. Mani master kindly came to see me. Visited Mr. Sankara Pillay, the second class Magistrate, especially as I had to refuse an invitation from him to take meals with him last night. * 21st Feb. With Mr. Verghese, called on Rt. Rev. Mar Dionysius, and Rt. Rev. Mani of Nithiyirikal and my old master Mr. John Chandy who is now the Superintendent of the C. M. S. Press here. His Grace told me he was a great friend of Dewan

Sankunni Menon. He has a grand, venerable appearance, and from his talk I could easily gather that he is a great man. He told me of his visit to Antioch where he went to see the Patriarch. He embraced me and blessed me on parting and said "By the grace of God, may you become as famous as your Karnavar." I thanked him. Mr. Chandy showed me round the Press. I also visited the C. M. S. College and the Mar Dionysius Seminary. Mr. John Kudtan (my father's nephew and my old master Kunhu Kudta Penikar) came to see me. He told me that one of my letters to him was taken from him by Rev. Bower, B. A., of Trichur to be sent to Great Britain as containing the opinion of an educated Indian on the Bible. Mr. Verghese came in the afternoon with Mr. Kottarethil Sankunni. We three had a long, pleasant and interesting talk. Mr. Sankunni is a regular repertory of stories. He is a very good poet. I have asked him to render *Malathi Madhavam* into Malayalam to be published in the *Vidya Vasinini*. At night, I started on my return journey.

While living with my mother at Chowarah, Thottummukham to be precise, I went to Kalati, to the churches of Kanjur and Malayattur; I visited the ruins of a tank near Alwaye said to have been built by Uliyannur Perumthachan; I also saw a hook-swinging festival. I could not bear the sight of a man dangling in the air on a hook fixed to his back and the rope tied to something like a crane. So I came away without waiting to see this religious ceremony. The ruins lie near the Paratti house in Alwaye. The peculiarity of this tank is that, when one got into it, one would find it a bit difficult to discover the cardinal points of the horizon. Hindus have to face east when they offer ablutions in the morning, and north or west on evenings. The famous carpenter got into a row with the Brahmins of the locality, and it was to retaliate upon them that he resorted to this artifice, so

that they might not easily perform their ablutions properly.

To prepare a superior sort of mortar for the construction of this tank, and a small shrine, he wanted a large quantity of the speckled seeds of *abrus procatorius*. So, he went about the market-place with the cry of "three kuhni-kuru for one puthen." (that is, ten pies for three seeds of *abrus procatorius*). Thinking, that they would get one puthen (ten pies) for three seeds, many merchants who traded in hill products procured large quantities and demanded their price. He turned round and said in a jocular tone, "Price? Of what? I never asked you to get me this article. What I said was one puthen weighs three seeds of this kind. See if I am not correct." The merchants left them behind; and the carpenter carried them away.

At the time of Perunthachan, Alangad formed part of the Cochin State. That is how he speaks of puthen and not of Chakkram. He was a Cochinite; so also was the great advaita philosopher Sankara, for Kalati became Travancore territory only in 946 M. E. Let it be distinctly understood that it is not my patriotism that is responsible for this statement. It is an undisputed historical fact. Two Travancore Judges of the High Court of that State had to go into that question of the rendition of Alangad, and they decided in the way I have stated above.

For the first time, I visited Kalati on the 30th of March 1896. I alone knew what all emotions surged in my mind when I saw that place. It was then a small, insignificant village. The Chowrah river flowed close by the place where Sankara's mother was cremated. That spot was marked by a low, dilapidated wall. I prostrated in front of that holy ground. That part of the Periyar or the Alwaye or the Chowrah or the Churni river is called the *Matrubirtham* or the Ammanadi. Tradition says that it flowed further away, but that it was brought near by Sankara for the

convenient use of his aged mother. It was again from that river that he got leave of his mother to become a Sanyasin. There were ten illams at Kalati, all under the aegis of the South Mutt at Trichur, at the time of the death of Sankara's mother; of these, eight openly dissociated with him in the funeral ceremonies, while two, Kaippilly and Talayattumpilli, remained neutral. Those eight have perished; the other two still remain. Sankara belonged to the former of these two. When I went in to see the place, an old Namputari came out to receive me. On hearing that I am a member of the Thottakat family, he invited me to dine there; rather, I should say, he persisted that I should dine nowhere else. He said he had the happiness of dining in Dewan Sankunni Menon's residence several times. But, finding the illam in poor circumstances, I gave two rupees to the gentleman, under the guise of offerings to the Thiravellamanthulli temple. It seems that Sankara's mother was staying at Trichur and daily worshipping in the famous temple there so as to be blessed with a male offspring. She was then told in a dream that she could go back to her native place, and that she would be big with child on seeing a white fawn frisking near a mangoe-tree in front of the above temple. Hence the name.

From Kalati I went to Malayattur so as to be there on the first Sunday in Medam. On that day falls the celebrated annual feast of the church there. On my way thither, I stepped, into the Kanjur church to see the lamp presented to it by Sakthan Tampuran of Cochin. It is of a curious make, a rare specimen which I have not seen elsewhere. It is made of pewter. The cocoanut-oil, used for lighting it, is poured into the belly of an elephant that adorns it about its middle.

At Malayattur I lived in the Palace. Messrs. Paliyil Govindan Kutty Menon and Chappillil Govindan Kutty Menon were with me. The Vicharippus of the

Forest and of the Customs Department were kind enough to help us to get what we wanted. There was quite a rush of Christian pilgrims on the day we went up the hill. Many were going up, while others were coming down. One I saw going up on his knees; such is faith! It is a good climb of two miles from the bottom to the top, and the narrow foot-path was in no place smooth. But, when once you reach the top, you forget all about the tiresome journey; for the view from there is marvellous; and you get such beautiful breeze as will allay your fatigue in no time.

In the small chapel at the summit of the hill, I found in a glass case a small, black, very smooth cylindrical piece of granite stone, just like a *lingam*. When I looked at it carefully, I could discern two or three thin veins of a golden colour. These the Christians say represent the cross, while the Hindus regard them as sacred thread. These contend that, before St. Thomas came there, the stone image was worshipped as Siva. They say that it was the self-same image which Bakasuran worshipped and before which he practised his penance. He got his lotus flowers from a tank close by. The tank is still there to the south of the hill; and, though most part of it is silted up, yet I found large beautiful lotus flowers growing on the eastern part of it where there was plenty of water. There is a small spring in front of the chapel. To the east of the hill there are ruins of villages; so I was told by some connected with the forest department; a part of them I saw. These ruins were, according to them, the attenuated remnants of the Ekachakra village. The Parish Priest was kind enough to depute one of his assistants to go with me and to explain to me everything from their standpoint. Though we had invitations for tea, we thought it prudent to come away, before the day got very hot, to the palace and to have, before anything else, a refreshing bath in the crystal waters of the river that ran by it.

To Kalati I have gone again four or five times, and to Malayattur once again. The third time I went to Kalati was for the grand ceremonies connected with the installation of the deities in the temples, after these were constructed at the expense of H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore. Mr. K. P. Sankara Menon, who had by that time entered the Travancore service and was the Dewan Peishkar of Kottayam, was camping at Kalati. I stayed with him and so was able to participate in the functions without difficulty. To Malayattur I went a second time on the invitation of my friend, Mr. V. K. Govinda Menon, when he was the Ranger of the Travancore Forests on the Malayattur side. I was with him for a couple of days. He took me to several places. One of these trips I distinctly remember. It was up the river in a boat. The river was narrow and not deep; and, on account of the cascades, the boat had to be pulled up by half a dozen boatmen. The leafy shade created by the overhanging branches of trees on both the banks of the stream rendered the journey all the more pleasant.

But I have to retrace my steps to 1896. On the 23rd of May of that year, Mr. Karakkat Govinda Menon came to Chowraah with a letter to me from my elder sister. Here I believe I shall do well to follow my diary for a few days.

"1896-5-23. Karakkat Govindan came from Trichur with a letter to me from sister. In that she writes "for the sake of my children and of myself, start at once." Govindan told me in private that my master (Mr. K. N. Marar) has been appointed by the Sircar as a Commissioner to enquire into the truth of certain statements made by Peishcar (my brother-in-law) in a report concerning certain Kole lands. I think there is more behind this than what Govindan knows or tells me. Started with him to Trichur at 12 in the noon, after a hurried breakfast. To avoid any worry to my dear mother, I did not disclose the real

object of my trip. • 1896-5-24. Reached Trichur at 7 in the morning. Found Peishkar and sister wearing a woeful face. Sister told me that H. H. wanted to crush Peishkar, and so this commission is set on foot. Took coffee and started to Thathamangalam, as desired by the two, to take advice from my elder brother as to the course of conduct to be adopted by Peishkar. No supper last night, and no meals till I reached my brother late in the evening. But I never felt any fatigue as my mind was full of conflicting thoughts."

From what I gleaned from my sister's words, I thought she wanted me not only to take counsel from my brother but also a letter from him to my master. I did not like that move at all. But I could not make myself bold to bluntly tell her so. How to escape myself from the horns of this dilemma—that was in my mind all the way. Brother sensed the situation without any trouble, and realised the worry I was subjected to. He cut the Gordian Knot without any trouble. After we had our talk, he asked me to bathe with oil to remove the fatigue of the journey. By the time I finished my meals, my brother was ready with his letter. Luckily he owed a reply to master. That he wrote, and, in it, in passing, he remarked, "I hear of a commission. But, I know, in your hands, even if the heavens fall, justice will not be severed." When the letter was handed over to me, he asked me to read it; and, on my finishing it, he said, "If the man has really wronged, he should suffer for it." I knew that Peishkar and my sister were not treating my brother and his wife in a friendly or graceful manner, and my brother was not the man to forget any affront or to take it on his knees. But he was generous not to be cruel to an enemy when he was down. I shall go back to my diary of the 24th of May.

" 1896-5-24. It was about 12 when we finished our talk. I started at once. I could find time to talk only a few words to my sister-in-law before she retired,

and barely a word to my wife. But my angel will not misunderstand me. * 1896-5-25. Saw my master when I was nearing Trichur, which I reached at 3 p.m. He was proceeding to Wadakanchery for inspecting the Munsiff's court. On seeing me, he stopped his carriage, asked about my health and studies, and how my brother was. As we were about to part, I handed him my brother's letter. Told my sister, on reaching Trichur, all what had taken place after I left her. I also nerved myself to tell Peishkar not to be down in the mouth. Dangers we are to fear when they are at a distance, but, when on us, we must face them manfully. In this strain I went on for some time. Went out to see my friend, Raman, who was surprised to see me, as they never expected me there then. Played at football, and rode a cycle over a couple of miles. * 1896-5-26. Started to Ernakulam with Govindan and Karimpetta Achyutha Menon. * 1896-5-27. Reached Ernakulam. On our way, we chalked out a program for spending a day or two in a merry mood. I really wanted a bit of relaxation to relieve me from the strain through which I passed these two or three days. * 1896-5-28. We had boating. We played at cards, I am a novice there, and only know the old women's game. Sad to hear that H. H. the Seventh Prince (H. H. Ravi Varma, the late Elaya Raja) is suffering from insomnia and a slight attack of melancholia. Wrote to H. H. the Tenth Prince (H. H. Kerala Varma, B. A., the Maharaja) to let me know the true state of H. H.'s health. * 1896-6-3. Heard from the Tenth Prince that the Seventh Prince has recovered his normal health. But both want to see me, and the letter asked me to go to Irinjalakuda at once. * 1896-6-4. Reached Irinjalakuday. Had a long talk with the Princes. Then I went to Trichur. * 1896-6-7. Started to Chittur. I sold today my copyright over *Chandrasekara* to Messrs. V. S. S. Iyer & Sons for Rs. 75. A few days' rest I must have

before I go to Madras. I am quite done up with these forced marches. I was enjoying capital health at Chowarah; but now I look a ghost of my former self.

IV. My days as a married man.

I performed my marriage ceremony on 3-2-1896. About two years before that, my brother had broached this subject of marriage to me. He was then in his wife's house, convalescing after an attack of malaria. One evening, when I visited him and we were talking, my future wife came to the garden below and began to collect flowers for the evening service in her family shrine. It was then that my brother somewhat abruptly told me that it would give him immense pleasure if I could marry his step-daughter. He also told me that I could consult my mother and sisters before I gave him an answer. I at once replied that his lightest wish was a law unto me, but only I should like to marry after I got through my examinations and settled down in life. He then spoke with some emotion that his purse would be, as it had been, mine to meet all my wants. There for the moment the matter was dropped, and we went on to talk of other topics. My mother and sisters raised no objection to the choice of my brother; and, as for the bride, they had nothing but praise for her.

To quote the words of the late Kerala Varma, C. S. I., the Valiya Koil Thampuran of Travancore, "Srinathi T. C. Kalyani Amma comes of an old Nayar family settled in Trichur, the primeval capital of Kerala, now a charming town in the native state of Cochin. The celebrity of the house of Kuruppan is amply borne out by a long list of illustrious members, both males and females; and Kalyani Amma who belongs to a main branch of it, the Tekke Kuruppan, fairly promises to lend additional lustre to the already well-known family." She was born on 14-4-1055.



Sry. T. C. Kalyani Amma.

When I sent the Malayalam translation of *Ox-Mother Queen* done by her to His Highness, he wrote to say that, when he accompanied H. H. the Visakhham Maharaja of Travancore on his pilgrimage to Benares, he chanced to halt with the party at Trichur, and also to visit a Kuruppan where he met a young lady who was studying logic under the celebrated Bheemachariar. He also referred to the fact that he gave three complimentary slokams to that brilliant student. Two of them which he then remembered he had quoted in the letter. Let me quote one of them :

മകരയുഗം പരമേശ്വരീജിവി
 കർമ്മനി കഥിതാപി നവത
 ഭക്തശാസ്ത്രം ചാലുദിതാനന്ദ
 ബാഹ്യേ നിജ കൈതളകേരളം.

(Even though learned people maintain that the science of dialectic *Tarka Sāstra* is extremely tough, I am delighted to see that your sweet discourse makes it so easy and enjoyable.)

It may be interesting to record here, in passing, that Kalkulangam Rama Warriar, the famous scholar and learned commentator was also a student then under this distinguished preceptor, who is the author of the well-known commentary called *Gadadhareeyam*. There is a common saying about this work among Indian pundits that those familiar with Bheeman's *gada* (club) need never be afraid in any logical combat.

As soon as I got this letter, I knew that the lady referred to could be no other than Kunjikutti Atma, the grand-mother of my wife. So I wrote to the lady for confirmation of this belief of mine. She replied she remembered all the three slokams, and sent me the third one as well. She also was kind enough to send me the following verse about her composed by that erudite scholar, Kunjunni Nampuripad of Kuddalur Mana.

മിഥുനാഭാഭാസം സമീപിതമാണി
 ക്ഷമസ്തുവരാശ്വതികവചപ്രഭുണി
 ഇത്യംഗനാനാമപവാദരോരോര്യ
 വാണീസ്വപനാഭാഭാസം സമീപിതമാണി.

(Oh ! lotus-eyed lady, you seem to be the Goddess of Learning come down to the earth in order to wipe away the calumny on women that, in this world, the study and exposition of *Sastras* are confined to males alone.)

His Highness was delighted to know that Kalyani Amma was a daughter of the only daughter of Kunhikutti Amma. To the visit he paid her, he thus alluded to in the introductory poem he kindly contributed to the *Sarada*, a monthly, the first Ladies' Magazine in Ecralam, started and edited by Kalyani Amma with two of her lady friends.

ആ മഹാമതകൾക്കു വാണീധി മിഥുനാഭ
 കാമയാതൃവർത്തനം നിഷ്പന്നമാണുവാണി
 മോ വാമസേവയ്ക്കു നിശ്ശൂന്യമായിത്താ
 വാ വാണീസ്വപനാഭാഭാസം സമീപിതമാണി.

(A beautiful damsel, a disciple of the great dialectics-scholar Bhuemasacharya, captivated my mind the other day by her sweet, stirring and eloquent discourses.)

Kalyani Amma studied Sanskrit under her grand-mother, and also under that well-known scholar, the late Mr. Krishnan Embranthiri, who, almost throughout his life-time, was in the employ of her family as the Puranam-reader. She was a student of the Victoria Jubilee Girls' High School, and, after she left it, special tutors were employed to conduct her studies in English, music and needle-work. Even after her marriage, she continued her studies, and never disdained to be a student.

The course of our love did not run smooth for a short while. After the match between us was arranged, there were offers for her hand from two very high

and very rich quarters, and the mother and the grandmother were for accepting one of these very eligible, desirable persons. Brother, in one of his letters, hinted about this to me; and, although I felt sad and cruelly hit, I did not say a word on the subject in my reply to him. Luckily for me, when the matter was taken to Kalyani Amma for her approval, she voted solidly for me, and positively refused to have any one except 'Govinda Menon's brother.' That saved the situation, and healed the sore in my heart.

After this incident, brother wanted me to perform the marriage ceremony without any further delay; and when, as before, I requested him to postpone it to some time after my B. L. Examination, he wrote to me two long letters which would show what the state of his mind was at that time. They were from Thathamangalam, dated 19th and 28th of January 1896. I shall extract a few sentences from both of these, as they formed the deciding factors for my conduct in this supreme event of my life.

'With me everything is working at cross purposes now, and my present state of mind is so sadly afflicted, that I hope and fully trust you at least will give me some comfort. I have therefore only to request you to proceed to Trichur at once and make her your wife instead of your betrothed on the day appointed. Of course, I shall be responsible for the maintenance of you both till you are in a position to maintain yourself. I think that, in the interest of both my health and years, this is essentially necessary, and I fully trust you will not raise any objection to this proposal of mine. . . . I have become a very unfortunate man of late, and I write this with tears in my eyes. . . . in the full confidence that you at least will give me some consolation in my present misfortune by acting according to my wishes.'

When I wrote to him to know what made his mind so unbalanced, and to forgive me if I had contributed

to make him uneasy, he replied that he had been unjustly dealt with by the Chief Engineer. "He has been doing it for the last year or more, even after my deputation for boundary work. . . . If the Government will not right the injustice done to me, I shall think twice before continuing in service any longer. . . . The Asst. Engineer is here, and I spoke to him about what I heard about myself, and he has promised to back me up strongly." Then, reverting to the question of my marriage, he gave me no loophole to escape and insisted on having it performed on 3-2-1896, which he said was an auspicious day. "According to the custom obtaining among us in this country and which is the guide for mothers, my step-daughter in the eyes of my wife is fully developed and can't afford to wait any longer. It is too premature to think at present of working out radical changes in the customs of the country. The women are not enlightened enough to accept them without fighting to the bitter end. . . . As for the question of maintenance, you need not be afraid so long as I have the means to help you. Thus you will see that I told your objections imaginary and unworthy of a moment's consideration. Marriage in my opinion would prove more beneficial to your health than years of sojourn at Chowarah or any other sanatorium."

My marriage ceremony was of a very simple sort. I wrote to my brother that if, besides Kalyani Amma and her mother, that is my brother's wife, I found a third person, I would simply clear out of the place. So, when at 8 at night, the auspicious hour on 3-2-1896, I went to the Kurupath Brampi, I found everything arranged to my satisfaction. In the second storey I found a lamp lighted and a small mat spread before it. We three stood on it. But, just before the presentation of the cloth, the mother asked me if I had any objection to give a small *dakṣiṇa* to the priest of the family shrine. Of course I gave it, and he of

course, blessed all of us. Then I gave the cloth to Kalyani Amma, and we exchanged rings. I started to Ernakulam at once as I had to. That was why I was anxious to spend a few days at Thuthamangalam with my wife before I went to Madras.

I spent about twenty delightful days at Thuthamangalam with my brother and his family. His official residence was near a river which was there spanned by a very substantial bridge. There were no houses near our place. Chittur Tharu lies about two miles to the east, and that of Thuthamangalam about a mile to the southwest of it. During the days that I was there, my wife and myself went out in the afternoons for long rambles about the place, accompanied by a peon who knew the locality very well. On the way to Chittur, there is an ancient parish church. With the Vicar of that church we became acquainted, and now and again he would join us in our walks. About six hours I devoted to my law studies; and an hour and a half I spent in teaching English Grammar to my wife and in reading *Uthararama-Charitham* drama with her.

When I reached the place, there ran only a narrow channel of water in the stream; it was so shallow that the water was barely sufficient to wet my feet. Once or twice we walked for miles over the bed of the river. But, on the 15th of June, a week after my arrival, I saw a sight for the first time. For two days we had rains. On that morning I saw the colour of the water changed to red owing to the presence of mud. At 2-30 p. m., all of us could hear a rumbling noise at a distance which neared as the time passed. Many of us went and stood on the bridge to see the incoming of the floods. They came in large volumes with a tremendous force and covered the whole bed of the river several feet deep with water, all in a trice. Our bath-shed, though it was a firmly fixed was swept off as if it was a dry leaf. It was a sight

Worth saying. My stay was very pleasant. My ~~brothers & sister~~ ^{brothers & sister} too contributed in no small degree to make it delightful. But it was short as I had to leave the place to Madras on the 28th of June.

But let me just stop for a short while more at Thathamangalam, not that I am reluctant to leave my charmer, but to enable me to record an incident that I saw for the first time from there. I had, before that, seen wonderful feats of legerdemain and performances of magicians, but the one that I propose to narrate I saw for the first time from my brother's official residence in Thathamangalam. Karimaravuthan, a Musulman, was a native of Pudukagaram about two miles away to the west of our place. He was well-known to my brother and his family. To his children he was a welcome visitor. When he came, I was introduced to him. He was a tall, dark man with a winning countenance. The moment he came, the children flocked round him and began to pester him for all sorts of sweet articles. He laughed and told them to wait till he had a talk with me. He gave me a bit of his personal history, and, incidentally, of his devotional practices from which, he said, he gained the ability to satisfy the wishes of our young ones then clustered around us. Before he began to get the things for them, I took leave to request him to keep his turban and cummerbund away, and to allow me to see the inside of his satchel and the pockets of his shirt. There was not in it a sign of the neat raisins, sugarcandy, cardamoms and other things he produced with a wave of his closed palms in the air in front of him. He never for once brought his hands to anywhere near his person or articles of dress. To me his performance was inexplicable. He said he had under his control a spirit whom he had propitiated, and who assisted him to get at the articles. I believed him. Why not?

V. My Days of Trial.

Soon after I went to Madras, my eyes began to give me trouble. They would be blood-shot at times; the eye-lids became swollen. If I read for some time, there would be acute pain in the eyes, and water would begin to flow from them. Once before, I had a similar attack of this illness, but in a milder form. It was thought that it was then due to my intense work in the laboratory. I did not inform my brother about it; but he got information from another source and wrote to me in these terms:

"I received a note from Mr. K. P. Sankara Menon about the state of your eyes, and I am anxious about it. I hope you will at once purchase spectacles at whatever cost to suit your eyes and use them. You should also take care not to work hard." Spectacles I had not to buy then. Luckily, glasses I had not to use till I was beyond seventy except to decipher some olden documents while working at my cases in early mornings before the dawn of the day. The oculist of the Government Ophthalmic Hospital of Madras whom I consulted prescribed a course of treatment which was painful in the extreme. He said that I should apply the medicine daily for three months, and that, after some days, it would be possible for me to read a few hours in the afternoon with the help of an eye-preserver. Copper sulphate, and silver nitrate in varying degrees of concentration were some of the medicines that he used. After their application, the pain would subside and the eyes would be ready for ordinary use only by the afternoon. Another thing that upset me was the illness of my friend, Prince Ravi Varma. He came to Madras, consulted Doctors Branfort and Maitland who advised him to take rest and to go and live in Coonoor for some time. His Highness had therefore to discontinue his college studies altogether. Mental depression and forced sedentary

life brought on me at one time an acute attack of acidity of stomach and an equally bad attack of fever and diarrhoea at another. Again I thought it was not proper to indent on my brother for every need of mine. So, to relieve me of my difficulties in that direction, I had to sell my copyright over my novel *Chandrasekara* to a bookseller at Trichur for Rs. 75. It has subsequently gone to several editions, as it was more than once prescribed as a text-book for intermediate and one or two other examinations. Even otherwise it has always been a popular book.

I found my life at Madras so miserable that I did not know what to do. No doubt my friends tried to cheer me and did assist me in all possible ways. Some of these advised me to try a course of Ayurvedic treatment for my eyes. My brother also pressed me to go to him, although earlier he had written to me, "Study for the B. L. in right earnest without injuring your eyes and have no cares or anxieties on any account." Therefore I returned to Thathamangalam, and placed myself under a clever eye-physician there, and, afterwards, under my friend and relative Elamana Govinda Menon at Ennakulam.

I had to leave Madras somewhat abruptly, so that H. H. Ravi Varma wrote to me to Thathamangalam from Saidapet in these terms :

"You have left me in a sad state of mind. You tell me that you were obliged to leave Madras without seeing even your bosom friends . . . Think for a moment and imagine your state of mind were I to leave you similarly. Pray do not fail to write to me by the return post all about your complaint.

"From the concluding part of your business-like letter, I infer that you do not intend to return to Madras till the date of the next B. L. Exam. If this is so, please tell me where I should direct my letters to you."

Pichu, Dhara, Sirovaszhi, all these were undergone by me. Kuppakattan wrote to me to stop my study. "I don't see the slightest absurdity in advising you not to study. Health first and then study. Is it not so? You preach it to me, but you don't like to practise it yourself. I can prophesy and assert that you will never be a burden to anybody; but, on the other hand, a pleasure to any body to have you with him." I did not, however, fall in with his views, but continued my studies during those intervals that were left to me between pain and treatment. Once I even sat for my B. L. Examination, but failed to secure the total minimum for a pass, and that by a few marks. My revered master advised me to take a sannad for the District court, as otherwise the rule that was about to be enforced that only B. Ls. would be permitted to practise would bar that door for me. So I took a sannad on 27-4-1875 (14-12-1899) to entitle me to practise in the Anjikkaimal District Court at Ernakulam. For the Trichur District Court I took it only on 17-12-1879 (1-8-1904) at the cost of a party who wanted me to appear there for a case of his. When I took the sannad for the Ernakulam Court, Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon was presiding there. He called me to his private room, questioned me about my health, and, after giving me a few bits of practical advice, asked me to stand facing east, and, then, placing the sannad in my hands, said, "I expect a great future for you. May God bless you." My eyes expressed my gratitude to him which he noticed and appreciated.

I did not begin my practice at once. I went to Madras again as Dr. T. M. Nair advised my brother to send me to him. He himself took me to Dr. T. M. Pope who was then the Doctor in charge of the Ophthalmic Hospital, told him of my past creditable career as a student and of my interrupted studies in a way to evoke his sympathy towards me. He

examined my eyes very carefully, called his assistant Dr. Parrie and asked him somewhat angrily, "Would you prescribe the course of treatment you adopted in the case of Mr. Krishna Menon were he your son?"; and, afterwards, gave me a prescription which I have always found beneficial. Then he asked me about Cochin politics with which he became acquainted as he had been once the doctor of H. H. Kerala Varma, the Elaya Raja, and the brother of the abdicated Ruler. Speaking of the Elaya Raja, he said, "His death has cost Cochin much. He was really a great man. He died by his reading. Too much of it. So you too better take care of your health and eyesight." Dr. Nair asked me to stay in Madras for a fortnight to see the effect of Dr. Pope's medicine. While there, I got this letter from Mr. Rama Menon who was then the District Munsiff of Chittur.

4-1-1900.

My dear Kunju Krishnan,

Yours of the 2nd instant. For the past so many months, nothing has occurred that has given me more pleasure than the news contained in it. You have done wisely in having gone to Madras and consulted the doctors there. Though you are not explicit on the point, I hope they are of opinion that the case is hopeful. In the near future I hope to see you restored to perfect eyesight.

With respect to your sannad I can only congratulate the Zillah Court in having secured your services. You will have to get hold of a smart clerk who should be able to read out to you the records. You should thereby be able to give as little work to your eyes as possible. . . .

Yours affectionately,
(Sd) K. Raman Menon.

I started my practice only in the first month of 1976 M. E. I had still my days of trial to go through, my difficulties to meet. Before I begin with them, it will be useful and appropriate here to connect the narration with some extracts from my diaries.

19-7-1896. Had a long talk with G. P. about English and Indian politics. We also talked of the affairs of our own States. He gave me a copy of his *Representative Indians* and wanted me to review it in the *Madras Review*. He also gave me the right to render the work into Malayalam. He said, if I only cared for it, I could have a place in the office of the *Madras Standard* as an assistant Editor. I declined his kind offer with thanks as the pay was not an attractive one. * 1896-9-10. For the last two days I had an acute attack of fever and diarrhoea. My friend Dr. C. Ramineni Menon doctored me. I am being given small doses, so to say, of essence of chicken and brandy. I am not to take anything solid or heavy for another week. * 1896-10-23. Suffering from acidity of stomach. It was a novel thing to me to scratch myself, as I am not practised to scratching myself or another. Messrs. Sundara Iyer and Sons asks me, at the instance of Mr. C. Achyutha Menon, to take up the editorship of *Vidya Venodini*. This is the third time they do it. This time Mr. Achyutha Menon also writes to me that I should undertake the work. So I had to. * 1896-11-5. As desired by Mr. M. Krishnan, I had to set a paper in Malayalam for the terminal examination of the Senior B. A. Class.

On account of the trouble in the eyes, I was not able to regularly write my diary from 1896 to 1899. So, in those three or four years, what I used to do was to write short accounts during those days when I felt well. In one of these which covers a few months of 1896 and of 1897, the following remarks occur:

"Now Mr. Elamana Govinda Menon is treating me for the trouble in the eyes. Occasionally, the

inside of both the eye-lids is rubbed with the buds of the shoe flower. Excruciating pain I have to suffer then. The few hours, not more than 2 or 3 a day that are left to me, free from pain, I use to read law, newspaper and some general books, such as lives. I am also revising my rendering of the *Physical Geography Primer* of Macmillan's Series. I have at times to review books for the *Madras Standard* and the *Vidya Vroodini*.

Rama Menon have become reserved to me. Fumes of official incense have blinded his intellect perhaps! Mr. Rama Menon objects to his nephew Kochummi Menon's marriage on the score of caste of the proposed bride. Great Heavens!

"I am glad to note that Mr. C. P. Achyutha Menon tried at my instance his best to give Kochummi Menon a footing, and to help Kuppakadu Govinda Menon to get a scholarship.

"From Mr. Pallyil Gopala Menon and my brother I come to know the pranks that Peishkar plays in my family and the mischief he has been doing to it. His nephew, Govinda Menon, though he poses as a great friend of mine, is acting the part of a hero in a French sentimental novel.

"Mr. O. Sankaran Nair kindly wrote to Mr. W. T. Stead to permit me to translate his *Books for the Bairns* into Malayalam. The first book, *Aesop's Fables*, my wife has translated. She has done it nicely and I have just now published it.

"Elder sister is behaving towards the other two sisters, her brothers, and even to our mother in a way inconsistent with the ordinary dictates of affection and her education. To me she seemed to be very kind till lately. At the behest of my brother, I wrote to her about the disgraceful way in which she and Peishkar, her husband, have been neglecting the house and compound of my brother which they are now using, as he is out of Trichur. This made her show a bad

face to me. I do not care; for truth is truth and must at times has to be plainly told.

"I feel despondent, at times desperate. The sickness in my eyes has blasted my future. Why should I be a burden to my brother and an eye-sore to his wife? And these domestic troubles also go to disturb the peace. But for my wife, I would this minute end my life. I wrote to my master about my troubles. He has sent me a kind note. He advises me to take up some post and read at leisure for my B. L. But brother is deadily opposed to my entering service."

"31-5-1897. Got a telegram from Kuppakatan at Dehra Dhan to say he is suffering from small pox. Wired to place himself under a doctor. * 1-6-1897. Despatched a wire to Govindan to know who attends on him, and if any one need be sent from here. * 2-6-1897. Got a telegram at night from one of Kuppakatan's masters where he says, "Your friend almost cured. Don't worry." * 14-6-1897. My brother's wife is unwell. So I came to Trichur to-day. Brother wants me to stop here until she is completely cured of her illness. * 16-6-1897. *Chinderalala and other Fairy Tales*, done into Malayalam by my nieces, Ammini and Kochamma, I have given to the press. * 17-6-1897. Poor Perincheri Govinda Menon is no more. Though I was no friend of his, and he had even joined my enemies in speaking ill of me, yet I must say he was an industrious and intelligent student and a warm patriot. On my initiative, a meeting was held where it was resolved to send a letter of condolence to his brother. * 19-6-1897. Got a wire from Mr. P. Gopala Menon to proceed to Ernakulam at once. * 20-6-1897. Mr. Gopala Menon insists on my taking up an appointment in the Huzoor on Rs. 30. After the drudgery at the desk in the day-time, where can I find time to read? My doctor has asked me never to read at night for some time to come. Fortunately, ex-Dewan G. M., master, mother and Mr.

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interesting trip."

In the brief sketch in my diary of certain events that took place in 1898, I notice these:—"I wrote an introduction to Kottarethil Sankunni's Malayalam rendering of *Malathi-Madhavam* which he prepared, on my request, for *Vidya-Vinodini* which I am now editing with the generous help of my friends. Mr. C. Achyutha Menon was pleased to compliment me that I am keeping up the high level of that journal. I forced my friend, Oranganore Kunhikuttan Thampuran, to stay with me for a week to translate *Sankaracharya Charitam* into Malayalam, so that I might publish it in *Vidya Vinodini*.

For a week, my wife was with me at Ernakulam. She visited my relatives, and the wives of some of my friends and well-wishers. She visited the Girls' School at Ernakulam, and promised to give a prize for music, to the first student in that subject in the highest class. I took her to Cochin and showed her the Jewish Synagogue, the Dutch Palace, the mural paintings, the oil-mill, and the Thirumala Deraswom temple and the beach. By her modesty and intelligence and, may I say, her beauty, she created a very good impression, wherever she went, on those with whom she came in contact.

My eldest brother has been forced to resign, at the instance of H. H. the Raja, on the score of deafness. Deafness! He has been long in the service, is considered one of the best officers in the department; and not one has complained about this slight defect of his.

I attended a few meetings of the E. L. Union and with Mr. C. V. Subramanya Iyer drafted its report for 1896—7.

I have written to Mr. Muliyl Krishnan kindly to see if he could get *Malathi-Madhavam* prescribed as a text-book. Through his good offices it was possible for me to get, in previous years, *Sabhadrajanam*,

Uttararamacharitham, *Chandrasahsa*, *Ancient India*, *Vikramorvasceeyam*, *Chandakausikam* and *Halasyam* as books for study for some of the University Examinations. I have asked Mr. Kaviyur Raman Nambiyar, when he came to see me, to translate *Bhoja Charitham*. As the editor of *Vidya Vinadini*, the foremost literary magazine in Kerala, I come in touch with most of the great poets and prose-writers of the day. It is a source of delight to me that I am able to advertise their greatness and to be of service to them in several ways.

Went to Alwaye with a few friends for a change. The programme of each day consisted of both, play and a little study. Pallyil Krishna Menon, Karakkat Govinda Menon and myself went to Malayattoor on the invitation of V. K. Govinda Menon. We four went up the hill one day, the two former with great difficulty. One evening I showed them the system of Sandow's physical exercises. It was Mr. A. Srinivasa Pai, a classmate of mine, who advised me to take them. I believe I am the first to introduce the system into our State.

While at Alwaye, at the instigation of a servant of a relative of mine, my servant was caught by an excise peon. Cousin Kochukutta Menon, P. Sankara Pillai, and Parat Gopala Pillai stood by my servant and got him acquitted by the Court.

Took elder sister and her children to Trichur where I stayed for a month. My wife was revising her rendering of the *Mother Queen* when I went there. After her revision, I went through it carefully, and then sent it to H. H. Valiya Koil Thampuran with a request that it might be touched up and introduced by him. Mr. G. P. Pillai and his wife came and stopped with us for a couple of days. He is on his way to his native place."

Mr. Konkoth Ramunni Menon, on his return from England insisted on my meeting him at

Shorannur. I wired I would, and then met him there. We had a very long talk. Then we started to Trichur as he wanted to see his sister and my wife. On our way, we stepped into his house and was there for an hour. At Trichur he stopped with me, though he is ostracised from caste by the Ruler. My wife's grandmother, with a courage worthy of that erudite scholar, dared to face the dangers of his residence with us. The memory of those days will be ever fresh in my mind. What all talks and jokes. There was a grand dinner in his honour. It was arranged by my revered master, my dear brother, and other educated men of Trichur. His Highness' brother-in-law was made to sit, while eating, next to Ramineni Menon, on the same mat. I believe it was a pre-arranged strategic move. My friend, on parting, gave my wife a field-glass as a wedding-gift.

I wrote to my brother that, in spite of the disease in my eyes, his wife was anxious that I should at once enter life, that I was not receiving from her that affection and consideration which I had a right to expect from her, and requested his permission to stay with my mother or with my eldest brother. He replied that I was working on my imagination and that, in any case, I should not, for various reasons, take the step I proposed.

" 17-6-1898. I studied hard during the last week. The result is my eyes have become blood-shot. How am I to remain idle? Impossible. If I disengage myself, I become a prey to sad forebodings. Really I do not know what to do. • 18-6-1898. Mr. C. V. Subramania Iyer, a real friend of mine, wants me to send to the *Madras Standard* an article written by him about the present administration of the State. He knows that G. P., its editor, and myself are friends; but, from what he told me, I gather that he has traced to me the leaderettes in that paper about the sensational 'Cochin Forest Case.' C. V. is a good writer

and a friend of my master and of my brother. * 19-6-1898. C. V. came with his article. He came with Mr. N. Sankunni Achan who wants a time-keeper's place for his brother under my brother. Mr. K. P. P. M. was present at this day's meeting of the E. L. Union where, at my suggestion, a resolution to send a letter of sympathy to the Rt. Hon. Gladstone, and one to send a note of welcome to Mr. K. Ramunni Menon were passed. * 2-7-1898. How glad am I to read in the special number of the *Graphic* that Gladstone liked best *The Bride of Lammermoor* among Scott's novels. That is my favourite too, while Rama Menon stands for *Ivanhoe*. The former has an oriental air about it and appeals to my imagination. * 9-7-1898. I accepted the Presidentship of the College Union. The members would not leave me till I did. But I made them understand that my indisposition, studies and literary work might stand in the way of my regular attendance at their meetings. Here is a verse of the late Dewan Sankunni Menon about Kirankulangara Uzhuthra Warrior who was living in his residence and who tried to have many irons in the fire. I got it from Mr. C. A. M. whom his friends call C.P.

കിരങ്കുലങ്കരയിലായിരുന്ത

ശൈശവകാലം ചിഹ്നിക്കേതി

തന്നിൽ പാടവ്യസ്തൻ

സമൃദ്ധി മുഖമുദാഹരണമേതാനി.

24-7-1898. There was a variety entertainment in the College Hall last night. It was got up by the E. L. Union in honour of H. H. the Raja. My recitation of *The Twins* was very much appreciated by the audience. I had a mask on my face, so that very few knew who I was. * 27-7-1898. The 3 Rs. that every month I got from my uncle (I mean ex-Dewan Govinda Menon) I give to my mother, and the Rs. 3 I get from *Vinodini*. I give to my wife. Mr. Vengayil Kunhi Raman Nayanar writes to me a very kind letter

and offers me as a present the plates for my rendering of Profr. Geikie's *Primer on Physical Geography*. "You can have the plates for nothing as a small token of my best regards for your noble self." So writes my friend. I accepted the offer with thanks. I have taken enormous pains over this translation to make it easy and graceful, and worthy of its original. • 30-7-1898. Mr. Pallyil Gopala Menon and Mr. C. V. Subramaniya Iyer came to me last night with their articles for the *Standard*. We read and discussed them. It was decided to send Mr. G. M.'s first; so it was taken back to be fairer. I told C. V. that this, his second contribution, was not an advance on the first. There was a falling-off from the first. We had to bodily remove certain parts. I shall never be a party to abuse. Facts and figures must tell the tale with force. • 31-7-1898. "Music or literature which is more pleasant"—that was the subject for this day's debate at the meeting of the E. L. Union. Mr. C. S. Gopala Panicker, a poet and musician, personally came to invite me to preside over the meeting. I felt it as a great compliment. There was a warm, educative discussion. On division, the votes were equal. • 7-8-1898. I got the *Story of Gladstone's Life* from the Union Secretary. I like biography more than any other form of literature. I gave a good part of the day to read the book. It is an interesting, stimulating story. I read in it that W. E. G. "was a hard and constant reader, and that in 1839 he injured his eye-sight by persisting in reading at candle-light." Hope my complaint also will pass off like that of the G. O. M. • 9-6-1898. The editorship of V. V. gives me a lot of trouble in the revision of articles and in the correspondence for contributions. But in the acquisition of lasting friendships with literary men and in becoming conversant with the play of human passions and prejudices, it is doing me much good. • 9-8-1898. Wrote to brother thus: "I have no objection

Padmanabha Menon are on my side. So, at last, Gopala Menon also came round. I go back to Trichur. * 22-6-1897. While at Ernakulam, Mr. C. P. Achyutha Menon told me that, before he got my application for the Headmastership, a new man had been written to or else I could have been given that. The introduction of a new man I find is only a diplomatic move. Therefore I wrote to Mr. A. M. that, by his stumping me out, I am not desperately hurt. I used my stay at Ernakulam also to petition Dewan Mr. Rajagopalachari in the matter of taking the western part of the compound where my family residence is situated for a road on its western side. The Dewan at once visited the spot, complimented me about "the excellently written petition" and acceded to our request. * 6-7-1897. Reached Thathamangalam yesterday. Started a course of treatment for the eyes. This is to go on for 7 days; and another 7 days more I have to take perfect rest. * 27-9-1897. Visited Gurumadhom in the Thekkay Gramom of Chittur. This village was founded by Thunjath Ramanujan Ezhuthachan, the great Malayalee poet. He died from here. In the two temples here, the offerings started by him have precedence over all other offerings. In the mutt, his sandals are kept and worshipped. I also went to worship in a temple situated on a hill called Kenampilli Mala, and dedicated to Sri Subramanya. * 1-11-1897. Mr. Rama Menon, who is the Munsiff here now, and myself visited yesterday the anicuts belonging to the Sirkar and to Mr. Kiddu Pillay. They are under the supervision of my brother. He deputed Mr. Sankara Panikkar, the time-keeper, to show us round and to make our stay in the Moolathara Bungalow comfortable to us. On our way back, we went to see Mr. Chondath Govinda Mannadiar who has married a cousin of my wife. By the time we reached there, brother had come there with his wife and children. We had a pleasant and

and this, I had a pull at the oars. Oh! I love boating. * 5-9-1898. Mr. V. K. Sankara Menon and C. V. brought to me a very nice article. It was their joint production they said. It was about the appointment of one Mr. Krishna Iyer, a vakil at Palghat on Rs. 200 per month to look after the Vadakunnathan Devaswom affairs in British Malabar, although we have already a highly paid Superintendent of Devaswom in the State. They want to get it published in the *Hindu*. So I gave them a letter to Mr. Karunakara Menon and one to Mr. Ranga Iyer, his assistant. * 7-9-1898. To-day the thali-tying ceremony of my nieces took place in the East Tottakkatt house. I hate this useless ceremony. I told my elder sister that she should not permit the string to be tied on her daughters by any one except herself. So she did. But, for the request of my elder brother, I would never have gone to the place at all. It seems some busy-body, bent on creating mischief, reported the nature of my opposition to the ex-Dewan. He said "Kunhikrishnan is perfectly right in his opinion. Money that is spent on this is only wasted." That rebuff served the informant right. I shall not soil my diary by writing in it the name of the informant.

29-9-1898. My master has with him the microscope of H. H. Ravi Varma. I took it from him, and a few slides to be shewn to my wife. I explained the several parts of the instrument to her. * 21-9-1898. Poet Kunhi Kuttan Thampuran came to me and kindly read out portions of his *Alamkara Sastham* to me. While we were engaged in it, poets Kaviyur Raman Nambiyar and Ambalapuzha Madhava Puduval came to see me. Figures of speech and their function in literature formed the subject of our conversation. Thampuran's work is to be published in *Vaidya Vinodini*. * 20-10-1898. In spite of my humble protest, brother insisted on having my *dhara* treatment at

T. C. house. My wife worked like a slave. Her grandmother has been very obliging and treated me as one of the family. Brother's wife supervised the whole thing. To me this solitary confinement is irksome. When undergoing the treatment, I am not permitted to read or move about. Absolute rest I am forced to take. This is the third time I am having it for the sake of my eyes.

* * * *

During the course of the passage of the bill intended to validate the marriage of one with the sister of one's deceased wife, Lord Palmerston is said to have remarked that the only point in its favour was that, when it became law, one would have only one mother-in-law. The force of this remark I realised by experience. There was another who did the same, but on a later date. In a letter from Dr. A. R. Poduval, these words occur: "As a matter of fact, you could presume this much, that a quarrel of the sort between an independent youth of my stamp and an old lady, are not likely to be long sustained without the weaker party feeling the weight of the tension, and I sincerely hope that she will appreciate the magnitude of the rift before many days are past." Dr. Poduval was a bit of a genius, and he had also his share of the eccentricities that occasionally go with extraordinary minds. He was not only a clever doctor, but also an equally good scholar and artist. Our spheres of work did not put us much together; but I never failed, at any time, to admire his attainments, and he, in his turn, to appreciate my friendship. I used to get long letters from him while he was in England, Germany and Mesopotamia. The last letter I got from him was from Madras, dated 22-4-1940. He did not live long after that.

"This is the only form of exercise, I am allowed now—writing letters. I am very glad to receive a letter from you from Ooty; it seems to bring a whiff of the cool Nilgiri air into the hot plains of Madras.

"My last letter written to you in January exhibited obvious apprehensions about my future; that was no fussing about an airy nothing. To speak plainly, I was almost sure what I was suffering from. . . . I guessed that my condition was very serious.

"Between ourselves, I have a malignant growth in my left lung. . . I was for 35 days in Dr. R. Rao's Radiological Institute. . . These exposures are very, very exhausting. As a matter of fact, I am now convalescing from the effects of the exposures. It is too early for me to say which is worse, the disease or the treatment. Very probably, but for the treatment, I would have been a finished case by this time. . . Well, I am alive. The last film taken showed that the growth had nearly disappeared. . . .

"Yes, I have been reading quite a deal about Himalayan journeys and mountain climbing. Baby I think has put you on the track. I had definitely told her, when I asked her to supply me with certain books, that my idea was to enjoy in imagination, what I may never be destined to realise in actual act. Still one never knows one's luck. If God grants me strength enough to go to Badari, we shall go together. I have not read Dr. Somerville's book, but I shall read it when I get a chance. I have read Will Durant's *Masters of Philosophy*. A most exciting book.

"I have been reading a good deal of controversy about the location of this "Karur" in the papers, and I have my own views on the subject. Yes, I am very much interested in archæology and ethnology—as an artist and medical man.

"I am told you are exploring temple architecture in the Nilgiris. Quite an exciting pastime it must be.

Now I must stop; I am tired."

The Baby referred to in the letter is his youngest daughter Vimala Devi. She is a favourite of my wife and myself. Like her father, she is a genius; but, unlike him, she has not got any of his oddities. She is a balanced, well-behaved young lady, loving and beloved. Brilliant is too weak a word to characterise her career in the school and college. In the Honours course, she topped the list in English and Botany. Then she did research work in her special subject and took the M. Sc. degree with distinction. Now she is an M. B., B. Sc. She can paint and sing well. I can easily predict a great future for my dear Vimala.

In the Diaries of both 1898 and 1900, there are frequent references to the acts of unpleasantness, to use a mild expression, I had to suffer at the hands of my mother-in-law. My sensitive nature enhanced the agony of my feelings, while my attempt to conceal them from both my brother and my wife only intensified the acute pain of the heart. I never tried to retort or to pay her back, but always showed her the genuine respect that was her due as my brother's wife. However, Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon, my master and Mr. Raman Menon came to know the state of my feelings. All these tried to pacify me as much as they can.

My dear Cochaniyan, |

I can fully sympathise with you in your present anxieties, as I myself have had similar ordeals to pass through. But that however is no reason why you should become desperate and take gloomy view of things or act hastily and without full and proper consideration For goodness' sake, don't be dejected or overstrain yourself unnecessarily. You may safely leave the matter to me, time and patience;

and, after due consultation with all those sincerely interested in you, I hope I shall terminate matters creditably and profitably to yourself and to the satisfaction of all. In the meantime, there is nothing at present to make you so much disturbed. Again wishing you to continue as usual with your books and cheerful ways,

I am,

Yours affectionately,

(Sd) P. Gopala Menon.

My dear Aniyar,

It pains me very much to hear of your troubles. . . . I can very well sympathise with you: for, at a similar stage of my life, I passed similar, if not worse, troubles myself. Take heart from that. Perhaps you don't know what induced me to take up a teachership in the Kerala Vidya Sala. I was plucked in my B. L. twice. I was privately engaged to be married, and my lady-love was, according to orthodox notions, much passed the marriageable age. I knew my uncle on whom I solely depended for support disliked the notion altogether. . . . I failed again in my examination. Even in the Pleaders' Test Examination I could not get a pass. Oh! It makes me miserable to think of those things even now. I patiently bore all my troubles and applied myself diligently once more to my books. I passed and you know the rest. So take heart from my example. You are in a much better position than I was. Your brother is very kind to you and is willing to support you. The marriage was not only with his consent, but to his liking. The only thing is you think it is high time your brother were freed from all this bother. But it is not your fault. You may lighten his burden by taking up an appointment until you

pass your examination. You may then leisurely read for it without much strain upon your eyes

With my kindest regards,

I am,

Ever yours very affectionately,

(Sd) K. Narayana Marar.

The one person who, purposely or not I cannot say, aggravated my misery was my brother-in-law, Mr. Narayana Menon, then a Dewan Peishkar. One day he went to my wife's house and, in the course of his talk to the two ladies there, informed them of the proposed marriage of the Raja of Kollengode to his eldest daughter, and remarked, "Aniyam wanted her to be married to my nephew Govindankutty. That alliance would have brought burden on me, similar to the one which he has created for his brother by his marriage." When I heard of this, I wrote a strong letter to my sister, to which Peishkar replied that what I heard was not all true, and added that he was prepared to help me to get a post. I told all these facts to my brother. At that time, Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon also happened to be present. Simultaneously, both of them asked, "Why did he go there?" Then brother asked me to write to him at once, which I did, that I never wanted his post. Finally, brother told me "You need not have any cares. You may read leisurely for your examination. I have got an increase to my pay. That will keep us all happy." Gopala Menon came up to me and patted on my back and said "Cochaniya, please do not worry over small things. Your bad time *sandasa* will pass away soon. You have been a good boy, and so you are bound to become a great man."

I think I may well leave this unpleasant subject here. Before, however, I proceed to give a few extracts from my diaries of 1899 and 1900, I wish to

supply one omission. I should have stated that I got leave from Mr. W. T. Stead of the *Review of Reviews*, to translate any book from his *Books for Bairns* series, through the kindness of Sir Sankaran Nair. Both Mr. Stead, the Editor, and Mr. Edwin H. Stout, the Manager, were very kind to me. When they found that my ambition was not to make money but to improve the literature of my mother-tongue, they became generous as well.

"Your friend" so Mr. Stout wrote to Sir S. Nair, "is at perfect liberty to translate the letterpress of any of our *Books for Bairns*. . . . If you desire to publish any one or more of these books in the native language, we shall charge only £5 instead of £10 for a set of blocks."

But where am I to get £5? So the translation of the first book, *Aesop's Fables*, came out without any illustration. On the receipt of a copy of it, Mr. Stead himself wrote to me a nice letter.

"I thank you for sending me the *Aesop's Fables*. . . . I note what you say in the Preface about your inability to buy the plates. But if you are continuing the series, I should be glad to let you have the plates for a frontispiece at any rate."

Subsequently, in 1900, when I sent him a copy of my rendering of the *Physical Geography Primer* for review, Mr. Stout pleaded want of space. "Thousands of publications find their way into this office in the vain hope of getting notice. So I am unable to give you a promise."

"But Mr. Stead notes with pleasure the fact that you have already become a benefactor to your race, and he notes with further pleasure the fact that your wife is collaborating with you. That being the case, he sends you a photograph of Mrs. Stead as well as himself. I have not got a similar photograph of myself; only this little snap-shot taken with my own camera."

Now I shall proceed to give some extracts from the diary with such running comments as the context may require. As I remarked on a former occasion, the diaries of 1899 and 1900 also, owing to the trouble in the eyes, contain more or less short notes of the incidents of definite periods instead of regular entries of daily events.

Early in January 1899, I note these facts :—"I feel slightly better after the treatment I underwent in November and December 1898.

"My wife's book *Our Mother Queen* is published. Everywhere it is met with a chorus of praise. What a joy it will give to that innocent angelic nature.

"*Sankara-Charitham* is also published. It is a Malayalam rendering by Mr. Kunhikuttan Thampuran, done at my request, of a Sanskrit Kavya got from Kalati, the birth-place of Sri Sankara."

It was Mr. Parakkal Krishna Menon who got it for me. Here is his letter about it.

2nd June 1893,
Ernakulam.

My dear Aniyam,

Sorry you left this before I came here. As asked by you, I paid a visit to Kalati, and I am glad to say that my mission was a successful one. Though I had to spend a few rupees, I was fortunate enough to secure two lives of our old law-giver. One is in the form of a song (സംസ്കൃതപദ്യം) and the other, a tolerably big one, in the form of *stokas*, numbering about 500. The latter is a *grantham* which I bought, and the former I copied. Both of these I shall bring when I come over there, the date of which is not yet settled. I think you have heard of the grant Ramanni Menon received from the Government—£ 100 for 3 years together. We are all getting on well here. My

best compliments to Antony & Co.

Yours affectionately,

(Sd) P. Krishna Menon.

"At the pressing request of my friend, Trichur Thaikkut Narayanan Moosath, the well-known physician, I visited him recently at his residence. Afterwards, he wanted me to preside over a meeting of a Sabha of which he is the President. My speech was appreciated by the audience; while I found my enthusiasm was catching, I expressed a wish that the Sabha would soon have a place of its own, which should also house a library and a dispensary. Moosath said that he considered my words as a blessing and that he would do his best to materialise my desire.

Had been to Trichur on the 16th January to be present at the ceremonial marriage of my niece Antoni with the Raja of Kollengode.

7-2-1899. Mr. M. Krishnan has kindly sent a copy of Eha's *A Naturalist on the Prowl* as a gift to my wife. He writes very highly of her literary talents.

10-2-1899. Got a wire about the birth of a son to me. His star is the same as that of mine which I am told is good.

These facts may be gleaned from the short account in the diary, which was intended to cover the months, from March to June.

"Went again to Trichur for Dehra. Saw my wife and son. My charmer was pleased to have my company. Our son is a healthy little chap, and looks like my wife in the face particularly. This time the treatment did not benefit me as much as the previous one, probably because my wife would not attend to it.

Govindan came from Dehra Dhun. He looks the old fellow, every inch.

"Came to Ernakulam after spending about 40 days at Trichur. While at Trichur, Kunhi Kuttan

Thampuram handed over to me the faired manuscript of his rendering of *Kadambarikathasaram*. This he translated from my residence at Ernakulam as a penalty, so he said, for not rendering, as I wanted, the *Saka-and Kokila-Sandesams*. He read three acts of his drama *Sri Mana Vikrama Vijayam*, and accepted the humble suggestions I made about the work.

"I had to return to Trichur to receive Dr. T. M. Nair and Mr. G. P. Pillai who stayed with my brother as his guests. One evening, I took them to my wife's house for tea. There, after the ladies left us, we had a long talk about Cochin politics. They appreciated the order of the Appeal Court on the petition presented by Messrs. P. Gopala Menon and K. P. Padmanabha Menon about certain strictures passed by the Special Magistrate, appointed to try what is now familiarly known as the Forest Scandal case, on the conduct of those two who appeared for the accused. The Advocate-General of Madras also remarked that we were perfectly within their legitimate limits as lawyers in all what they have done for their client. However, Mr. K. P. P. M., dissatisfied with the political atmosphere here, has left to Trivandrum to practise there.

"Made arrangements for the publication of the translation of *Representative Indians* in the Kerala Kalpadruma Press. As desired by the author, I revised *Maharashtra Nayakan* and wrote a preface to it. Have sent my paper on *Malayalam Literature* to Prof. Rajaraja Varma for his critical revision."

The next extract will take me to the end of 1899. The account in the diary is from July to December.

"Went with Govindan to Shoranur to be under the treatment of Mr. Munda Vydyan. We stopped in the palace precincts for 15 days. He applied leeches to my eye-lids, and rubbed them thrice with the bud of shoe-flower. What pain! Mr. Elamana Govinda Menon, because he is a friend of mine, performed

this operation with less pain to me. Next I am to undergo *pichu*. After I left Shoranur, Govindan left to Nemmara, as he got a place in the Forest Department.

For a short period, brother is made the Ag. Chief Engineer.

I finished my work of translating the portion of Mr. G. P. Pillai's *Representative Indians* which I have set apart for me. I am hurrying the others also in the work. The translation is being revised by H. H. Valiya Koil Thampuran.

Mr. K. C. Kesava Pillai insists on my writing a preface to his *Subashitharghokaram*.

Mr. G. V. Subramaniya Iyer asks for leave to publish my *Physical Geography Primer*. It has been very carefully revised by my friend Mr. Rajaraja Varma. Over this work of mine I have spent much trouble.

Mr. Pallyil Gopala Menon took me to Mr. Elan Krishna Menon, a well-known eye-specialist. Both he and his nephew Govinda Menon say that my eyes are weak; but they are decidedly of opinion that there is nothing wrong with the organs so as to be anxious over them. When my general health improves, say they, they will gradually grow strong and right themselves.

In the editing of the *Vidya Vinodini*, Mr. V. K. Kunjan Menon has created some trouble in connection with the publication of a poem called *Kavi Mrghavali*, and one or two articles. As my assistant, he should have loyally obeyed me; instead, he took upon himself rights which he had no right to assume. So I had to correct him and to make him realise his position. The little unpleasantness which my necessary interference occasioned to him will, I am sure, wear off soon.

Brother is not given the place of the Asst. Engineer when it fell vacant, though he was found competent to be the Chief Engineer. In his department,

it is a well-known fact, there is none who knows more than him its work. But this as well as his 24 years' experience counted for nothing against the prejudice entertained against him by some because he was the confidential friend of the late Kalya Rao. The loss of this Prince is a death-blow to Cochin, for he was a liberal statesman, a far-sighted social reformer, and a great Sanskrit scholar. He encouraged literary men very generously. He was a patron of female education. No doubt, he was a man of strong likes and dislikes, and was obstinate at times. But nature might boldly stand up and say he was a man.

Presided over the annual meeting of a large Sabha in Parur. The Committee kindly adjourned the date to suit my convenience.

On the occasion of the rice giving ceremony of my son, I entertained the members of the Rama Varma Union Club and of the Literary Union at a tea-party.

My slashing reviews of the translations of *London and Paris* and of *Kural* have created a welcome stir in literary circles. Several have congratulated me on this healthy move."

By the beginning of 1900 my eye-defect began to put on a healthy, normal appearance; but, then, I noticed another defect in the organ. When I looked at a light from near, I saw a shadow, a sort of penumbra, to the left of it; from a distance, instead of a shadow, a pencil of rays. I was frightened out of my wits when native physicians expressed a doubt that this might be due to cataract. So, I went to Madras to consult the doctors there. Drs. Pope, Madhavan Nair and Nanjunda Rao said that the defect was due to my squint, and to nothing else. The first said, "If I were you, I would leave it alone. But, if you want, I shall try to remove it by an operation. I am not quite sure of success, as the slight squint you own is, so to say, a congenital one." I came away.

Towards the close of 1879, I had taken a sannaad for the Anjikaimal Zillah Court. So, much against my dominant, inner wish, I began to prepare for the work at the bar to relieve my brother of the financial burden on my account. In all the turning points of my life, I implicitly obeyed him. He wanted me to study for B. L. when I was keen on studying for medicine to be a doctor, or for M. A., so as to qualify myself to be a teacher. Then he forced me to marry, though I requested that it might be done after I became a High Court Valid. Finally, he refused permission to take up service in the Cochin State when, some three years ago, his friends and well-wishers persuaded me to accept a post. For these three wrong steps that I took in my life, I suffered as perhaps no young man had suffered. At times, I wondered why I did not go mad or commit suicide. My brother's unalloyed love and kindness to me, and the thought that I had to care for my dear wife sustained me in my worst days of depression.

When Raja Vasudeva Raja of Kollengode, who married a niece of mine came to know me somewhat closely, he said very kindly that he would try to get me a place in the Travancore Service, as my brother was against my accepting a post in the Cochin State. To this end he furnished me with letters of introduction to the Dewan of Travancore; from Mr. Rees, the British Resident, and Mr. Rajagopala Chari, the Dewan of Cochin. Both these stressed on the point that my preference to a start in Travancore to one in Cochin should not be taken as a point against me. These letters were supplimented by another from Valiya Koil Thampuran after I reached Trivandrum and paid my respects to him. Personally I was not anxious to live out of my country as my highest desire was to serve my motherland, so that, while I enjoyed the trip, I did not feel disappointed though I had to return empty-handed. For an account of my trip, I

shall fall back upon my diary.

"On the 3rd of March I left this to Trivandrum with my friend Mr. G. V. Subramaniya Iyer, for my companion. He owns friends, relatives, and some properties in Travancore. We stopped at Thannirmukkam and Ambalapuzha for our meals. I relished my worship at the second place. Knowing who we were, an officer connected with the temple furnished us with a decent supply of the famous milk-pudding offered to the deity. On the fourth evening, we were the guests of Mr. Ponnambalam Pillay, the Acting Superintendent of Police. From the beach and from his house, we had a long talk about Cochin politics, the memorandum in connection with the allowance of Cochin Princes and so on. He seems to be conversant with Cochin affairs. We talked about the derivation of certain place and personal names, and how history could be evolved out of these. Finally, we compared the growth of Tamil and Malayalam literatures. He appeared to know Tamil well. When we left him, we heard him say to one of his attendants, "That Menon is a clever person". I inwardly thanked him for his complimentary remark.

"At Pennmana we halted to take tea. Quilon we reached at 12 A. M. I stayed with Mr. K. P. Sankara Menon, the Dt. Judge, while G. V. went to join his people. Mr. K. Achyntha Menon, Overseer, took me in his carriage for a drive, so that I may see the town. It is a beautiful town. Mr. S. M. insisted on my staying with him for a couple of days. Had Mr. Krishnan Pandalay, who is vakiling, and Mr. Kesava Pillai, the poet, as companions . . . Reached Varkalay early morning. There are many springs in and near the place. We had our bath in one of these near the sea-shore and then worshipped in the famous Janardanan's temple, appropriately described in the *Mayura Sandesam*. The owner of the place where we took meals told me that it was, in the fitness of things, that I

had gone there, as Dewans Sankunny Menon and Govinda Menon used to mess there on their way to and from Trivandrum while they were studying there. The tunnels are worth seeing. We reached Trivandrum in the early morning of the 7th of March. I went to reside with Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon and G. V. to his place. That very noon I paid my respects to H. H. Valiya Koil Thampuran. A magnificent and magnanimous personage ! A man to visit whom a journey is worth making. He said he was extremely pleased to see me. From the way in which he talked to me of men and things, I can realise he is sincere to me. "I have spoken about you to H. H. the Maharaja several times, so that I am the proper person to introduce you to him," he said. How kind of him.

"The next day I accompanied Valia Koil Thampuran to pay my respects to H. H. the Maharaja. After a short talk, H. H. asked me to see the Dewan. On the evening of the 8th, I saw Mr. Thanu Pillay, the Chief Secretary, who received me very kindly. He was sick and so was lying. I saw the Dewan on the 9th instant. He offered a place in the Registration Department. When he told me of the pay, I said, "That will not be enough for my house-rent." The Dewan looked shocked. But I sat unmoved and soon took leave of him. Subsequently, I heard that my failure must have been due to certain initial blunders in my tactical moves. I went dressed to see the Dewan, and sat down before his presence. These I should not have done, it seems. But I was not the man to go to him in tattered clothes, and to have stood before him in whispering humbleness. My own conclusion was that the Dewan knew that Mr. Rees was shortly retiring, and he was not the man to worship a setting sun. H. H. Valiya Koil Thampuran wrote to H. H. the Maharaja that I might be given, to start with, at least the Headmastership of the special

School at Mavelikarny. After consulting Messrs. Padmanabha Menon and Kochu Krishna Marar, I decided not to accept any place for a low pay. Visited Messrs. A. R. Rajaraja Varma, N. Achyuthan Tampi, Naganish and C. V. Raman Pillay. As my time was short, I could not find time to visit others who kindly came to see me. On my return, Mr. Krishnan Pandalay and Mr. C. Krishnan Pillay gave a dinner in my honour in which several prominent men of Quilon participated. One day I stopped with Mr. V. K. Govinda Menon. I reached Ernakulam on the 19th March. Brother said that he was glad that I was not metamorphosed into a Travancore official. So was I."

A few more extracts will complete the main incidents of 1900.

* 8-2-1900. There was a *sauri* earthquake this morning at about 8 a. m. I thought I was being tossed in my bed. The doors and windows made terrible noise. I feared the house itself would tumble down. Brother called out to me from his bedroom not to be afraid as it was only a mild tremor. The drumming in the temple, it was *alamam* time, abruptly stopped, and began only after a couple of minutes. * 16-4-1900. Mr. Swaminatha Iyer, the Special Officer who has been here to put the Sircar accounts in order, came to take leave of me. I showed him over the place which for its seclusion and sylvan looks he liked he said. He talked of his future work, and of the unstable nature of the Dewan. He remained with me for half an hour. Knowing as I do his taciturn and austere character as an officer, his visit and intimate talk is a matter of wonder to me. As for his work here, the local men conversant with our system of keeping accounts, call him *Kanakkapinakki Aiyar*. * 7-4-1900. My collection of the available unpublished works of Venmanis, father and son, is practically complete. I am writing an Introduction to them. Both of them have done much to improve the Malayalam

literature. They were really gifted poets. There is no doubt about that. * 17-4-1900. My *Physical Geography* was published on the 1st of March. All the papers except *Kerala Patrika* have reviewed it in very flattering terms. Mr. P. Govinda Menon said he was writing a reply to the offending paper. I told him to treat it with contempt as Patrick's ire was due to my adverse criticism of its *Pushpagandha-natakam* and to certain unfavourable remarks of *Vidya Vinodini* about *Manavikramas-ijayam* introduced by its editor. * 23-4-1900. I have finished several volumes of the *Library of Useful Stories*. I liked Grant Allen's *Story of Plants* best. I am reading Tennyson's life for the third time. * 1-5-1900. Two days ago I came to Trichur to take my wife over to Ernakulam as I felt her absence keenly. But her mother wants her in her house as she is not keeping good health. She says that I can take her after Pooram. I feel happy in her company. Moreover, I have here Achu, Kochunni, Kuppakkattan, Kochappan and others. At sister's place almost all the children are ailing from sore-eyes. None of them has any objection to have the medicines applied by me. * 5-5-1900. Mr. Appu Nedungadi has taken up the proprietorship of *Vidya Vinodini*. He wants me to continue as its editor. But I think this is a fit time when I can get out of that work. Owing to the indisposition of my dear wife, I have to disappoint Mr. Pattathil Narayana Menon and Mr. Appu Nedungadi who have jointly requested me to go to Calicut and spend a few days with them. * 6-5-1900. Got a letter from Prof. Rhys Davis to inform me that I am elected a member of the Royal Asiatic Society. I am surprised to get it, for I got no hint from any one before this day of my nomination even. I believe Valia Koll Thampuran wants to encourage me in my literary work."

There was a function in this connection. From a newspaper cutting I shall cull a few lines about it.

"Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon was entertained at a dinner on Sunday the 10th of May by a few of his friends. Among others, there were present Messrs. K. Narayana Marar, V. K. Kochunni Menon, P. Gopala Menon, V. K. Sankara Menon, K. Govinda Marar, Karimpatta Achyutha Menon, T. M. Krishna Menon, T. Govinda Menon, C. V. Subramania Iyer, Par. Krishna Menon, P. Govindan Thampi, G. V. Subramanya Iyer, S. G. Ramakrishna Menon and N. Madhava Menon.

"After dinner, there was music; and, before the assembly dispersed, Mr. Gopala Menon, on behalf of those present, congratulated Mr. Krishna Menon on the honour conferred upon him by such a wellknown institution. It would, he said, be out of place in him to enlarge upon the good qualities and philanthropic endeavours of their friend as they were wellknown to them. But he would like to say that his example would be an inducement to the other young men of the country, as the country's future depended upon such noble aspirations as those of their friend.

"Mr. Krishna Menon, in replying, said that he must be less than human were he not to feel the honour they do him and to thank them for the flattering terms in which they have congratulated him. He took the honour not as a recognition of services rendered, but only as an incentive to further efforts. He remarked that there were occasions when one could not put in words all that one felt, and so he would only say that 'Silence spoke best the heart's warm glow.' "

"7-5-1900. I have begun to attend Mr. P. Gopala Menon's chambers to study work. His clerk Nauu Menon is a clever man, and he is helping me much in the way of keeping accounts, diary, and of drafting plaints, complaints, written statements and petitions. I am reading the Cochin Regulations very systematically. * 9-5-1900. Mr. Ambadi Kochu Govinda Menon came to see me

in connection with the starting of a Malayalam Library in Ernakulam. He wants my advice and help in every matter, and particularly in framing the rules for its working. He went and arranged a place for it. * 22-8-1900. Presided at the annual meeting of the Football Club. The rules as revised by me were passed. They will, I believe, be able to revive this dying club. Mr. Judge Marar, my master, has kindly agreed to be its President. * 24-6-1900. Attended the meeting held to concert measures for starting a Malayalam Library and Reading Room in Ernakulam. The rules framed by me were passed without any change. I was unanimously elected President. But I declined the honour, as I was still a student, and proposed the name of Mr. P. Gopala Menon. The members objected to my withdrawal and Mr. Gopala Menon insisted that I should be the President. As a compromise, I agreed to be the Vice-President if he would be the President. Mr. Gopala Menon said he did not know whether or not to condemn or to extol my obstinacy. Anyway I gained my point. * 8-7-1900. Mr. Seshagiri Prabhu has sent me a copy of the thesis he wrote for his M. A. degree. But I was not able to read it at once as I still suffer from pain in my eyes which were bandaged after the lids were rubbed with the buds of the shoe-flower. * 12-7-1900. Selected books for the E. L. Union and Malayalam libraries. The life of Toru Dutt, which Mr. Govindan Elayadan wrote at my request, I have sent to Vidya Vinodini. I have asked my wife to write a short sketch of the life of Dr. Anandabai Joshi."

I began to attend court on Monday the 5th of Chingom 1076, corresponding to the 20th of August 1900. About my work in Gopala Menon's chambers, he praised me much. I never spared myself in preparing the notes, and in looking up authorities. I have also read a few treatises on the science and practice of law, and the lives of some eminent lawyers. I did not neglect

my general reading. For, from the diaries of the last two or three years, I find I then read some of the important works of Ruskin, De Quincey, and of Morley; those essays of Macaulay which I had not read during my college days; Swami Vivekananda's books on *Bhakti Yoga* and *Raja Yoga*; Tod's *Rajasthan*; new studies in Tennyson by Morton Luce; Laing's *Human Origins*; *History of the Maharattas* by Ranade; and a number of standard novels, some of which I had to review. In the closing months of this year, 1900 I mean, Kodungallur Kochunni Thampuran used to come to Ernakulam rather frequently. He never missed me on those occasions; and his talks on literary subjects were of great educative value to me. Incidentally he congratulated me on my membership of the Royal Asiatic Society, and suggested that we should have a literary society in Kerala, a membership to which should be a coveted honour.

"Let me first congratulate" wrote Mr. Appu Nedumgadi, the author of *Kendoletha*, "on your being made an M. R. A. S. Even the other day, I had occasion to mention to Mr. C. Sankaran Nair about your unflinching zeal in the cause of Malayalam literature. I am glad it has been recognised and to some extent rewarded. You will be, I am almost sure, a University Examiner next year." In the same strain I got letters from others, and addresses from Societies and certain pressmen.

I was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in 1901, and a member of the Royal Society of Arts in 1909, and a member of the Royal Society of Authors in 1910. On 8-10-1918, I got the title of *Sahityakasalan*. On the recommendation of H. H. Valiya Koil Thampuran, my wife was made a member of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1909. I was instrumental in getting a membership of that Society to my friends, A. R. Rajaraja Varma and K. P. Padmanabha Menon. The Professor acknowledged my effort in

these terms. "I rejoice to congratulate you at the success of your efforts in behalf of your friend who, but for the timely intervention of such well-wishers of his, could hardly ever aspire to the distinction of being a member of the Royal Asiatic Society. You have placed me under a very great obligation, and I am at a loss of words to express my feelings of gratitude for the favour." Mr. Padmanabha Menon's letter ran thus: "I have to thank you very much for proposing my name for election as a member of the Royal Asiatic Society. I shall always remember your endeavours in the matter."

However, I gradually came to realise that, being away from the seats and activities of these learned bodies, and as there are no branches of these anywhere in this Presidency, we out here in India could not be benefitted by them. No doubt there journals are valuable; but these any one can get on payment. This consideration made many of us to drop out of them one by one. None the less, I have been grateful to those great friends and well-wishers of mine who saw me elected to these celebrated institutions.

VI. My Friends of College Days.

I ask pardon for breaking off at this point, and writing something about my college day friends.

"As shells from the murmurs of ocean
Steal echoes that last,
So, in friendship is stored the motion
Of years that are past."

I do not pretend to have owned a great many friends. As Dryden rightly remarks,

"All other debts may compensation find,
But love is strict and must be paid in kind."

I never cared for hollow or superficial friendship. But I valued the love of true friends and tried to retain it.

"There's nothing worth the wear of winning
But laughter and the love of friends."

My idea here is to pay my tribute of love and regard to 'the glorious dead for ever dear'. But I may have to put in a word about a few who are happily still alive.

It is impossible to review the impressions of a college life, so full and so happy. But, on the whole, I think I may say that a student who was in the college from about 1891 to 1900 might be accounted fortunate as any man who ever lived in any age or country. For the joy and enthusiasm, not only the studies and the sports associated with a college life that would contribute, but also his friends would be responsible for a definite share. Two of my best college-friends were Mr. Karimpattu Raman Menon and Mr. Konkoth Ramunni Menon. There were many points in common with us three. We were very systematic in our studies, so that we had never to hustle through our texts when we neared the annual tests. We were always ready for our ordeals. We also found ample time to devote to general reading. We revered our preceptors, so that we had the privilege of being very much liked by them. Our loyalty to our literary heroes was real and abiding. Though we were not hilarious, we were a mirthful crew, and never cultivated gloom in the class, sporting-field or at home. We moved on pleasant terms with our class-mates, and because we gave no asylum to back-biting and jealousy in our hearts, we were able to command their respect, their kindness and, in some cases, their friendship. Nowhere you will find a purer form of democracy than in a well-regulated college. There every person will be taken only at his true worth; it is no place for pretentious superficiality.

After he left college, Mr. Raman Menon came to Ernakulam to practice as a lawyer. He lived in my place (Kumaralayam) for some months before he

rented a house and fixed up quarters there. But he soon accepted the place of Munsiff and worked in that capacity at Chittur and Vadakkanchery. By the time I came to Ernakulam with a view to settle down in that place to practise, he had got disgusted with his office and began to covet freedom.

"How I wish we two could settle down together at some centre and practice law." I am quoting from a letter he wrote to me in Makaram 1075. "We might then bring back the old days,—read the same books, think the same thoughts, have common aspirations and walk hand in hand in the path of righteousness and peace. Oh ! how I curse the bondage in which I am now;—the crooked knee, the hushed breath, and the eternal scramble for places."

At last he resigned. "Referring to your advice on the advisability of my proposed resignation", so he wrote to me on the subject then, "permit me to assure you that I value it as one coming from one of my sincerest friends and wellwishers. I will also tell you that you do not stand alone in the caution you earnestly recommend. I must in justice to my self not omit to mention that I have not matured this plan in haste, nor should you take it as one conceived in a moment of bitterness or pique."

When he came back to Ernakulam, we made up our minds, between us, to live as near as we could. So we both arranged to buy the plot of ground opposite to where I lived and still live. That belonged to Mr. Muthu Pillai, the eldest brother of my friend Mr. Ramakrishna Pillai. When I found delay in the purchase, I began to fret. He referred to that matter in this manner: "Of course, I should like to be your neighbour if I can; for, in spite of your many, many follies, I like you, old boy. But when you do business, you must be business-like and not sentimental." He did buy the plot, built a beautiful bungalow in it, and we were neighbours for several years.

From the above letter, I wish to transcribe one more sentence because it concerns my pet daughter Janaki. "This morning, as I was passing your gate (he means the gate of my wife's house at Trichur) on my way to the station, I met your Jan. What a sweet thing she is, upon my word; not a bit like you." She has always been a wonderful girl, the darling of her parents, and the favourite of her teachers. Her brothers adored her. She easily commanded the friendship of those who studied with her and of those others also who came into intimate contact with her. Years after, Dr. A. R. Poduval thus concluded one of his letters to me from Basra, "My best wishes to Janaki. She is a topping girl, isn't she? She knows to laugh all right and I love her for that."

To my ill luck, I do not know that. Even Chattampi Swami once complained to me that I did not learn to laugh well. Mr. Rama Menon's point also was that I am very sensitive and easily irascible. One point I am prepared to admit. I am shy, and reserved except in my intimate circle. I find social intercourse fatiguing, and I can keep up the conversation only with an effort. That is why in me there is an instinctive shrinking from my fellow-creatures. But it is wrong to suppose that I have no sense of humour.

When Mr. Rama Menon was in the front rank as a legal practitioner, another daring deed of his was that he went to England. That was in 1908. He came out as a B. C. L. and Barrister-at-law. Some of his letters from there I have preserved; they are models in the art of letter-writing. How we loved each other will be seen from them.

"I need hardly ask you to render every help to my wife and children so long as they are there, and I am asking Mrs. B. to consult you in every particular. You will kindly ask Dr. Menon (Chittayil Ramunni Menon) also to do the same till I return home.

"Kindly remember me to your spouse and tell her that I have really gone into sack cloth and ashes for neglecting to take leave of her before I left India. It was all a mistake."

Someone wrote to him, probably his wife, that both my wife and myself were not keeping good health. Then he wrote to me thus:

"Whether you follow my advice or not, let me see both of you in good condition when I return home. Do not take these words of mine as mere form, pray. Do you know, I have a weakness of praying in bed. And one of my prayers is that I may be spared and you two may be spared till we meet after a couple of years. You may say what you like and your querulousness I treat much in the same way as I treat the querulousness of my wife. I love both of you, and it would pain me very much to hear that you are losing your health."

His letters about his Oxford life will give one a graphic picture of that university.

"What a grand place is Oxford! How I wish that I could roam through the town with you and Mr. Justice Marar. It is more than a thousand years since the University College is founded. Then there is Balliol, redolent of the memories of Jowett and his disciples. Magdalen is the college of Addison, and Pembroke of Johnson. Christ Church glories in Gladstone. The Sheldonian Theatre, Ashmolean Museum and Bodleian Library are only a few of the other interesting places in which the town abounds.

The lectures are from 9 to 1. Then the lunch and games. Tea you take at 5 or 5-30. Then you sit to work which is carried on till 12 or 1.

I am a member of the Oxford Union which is a grand institution. It has its own fine buildings. Everything is arranged on the model of the House of Commons.

You may want to know what the teaching is like?

Well, you have in the first place the Varsity lectures. They are common to all the colleges; and are held in different halls to suit the convenience of the Professors. Some of the colleges are far apart, and unless you have a bike you will hardly be there in time.

Next comes the tutorial work. Each College or Hall has its own tutor who may also be a Varsity lecturer. You read with your tutor whatever you want to and he will put you on your way."

In another letter he goes into a little more detail.

"We attend a small class of Prof. Dicey's. He lectures on the 'Conflict of Laws.' He happened to give us a few questions to answer and I, among others, answered them as well as I could. He then wrote to me to say that my answers were 'decidedly good,' that I had quite grasped the meanings of Dicey, Westlake and Pillet, and that, where I happened to take a different view from Dicey (Fancy!), I was very ingenious. I have preserved his letter to me. He has also invited me to take tea with him day after to-morrow when he has promised to give me some advice as to the course of my reading. You ought to see that grand old man—how fragile, how thoughtful, how candid, how courteous! Sometimes we have our classes in his house. The old man spends his whole time in his library! Always reading and writing."

About some aspects of the social life in England, he used to write now and again. "What a civilization is here! Out there, if Mrs. A, for instance, or Miss B, for that matter, were to talk to me, scandal spins a delightful yarn and damn both me and them. That is perhaps the reason why Mrs. T. K. K. felt averse to correspond with me. And perhaps she is right."

But once or twice, she did write to him after this rebuff. From the reply to the first, a few extracts (which I make with her leave) will be interesting.

"You need not have been so very formal and ceremonious with me. There would not have been any very great impropriety in your writing a few lines to me, just to console a friend who is pining for home, family and friends. But you think otherwise; you are sensible.

You see I am back in Shanklin—the dear, little, leafy Shanklin. All great men have liked the Isle of Wight and so do I, which may perhaps show you that I am also among the great. I could just fill about a dozen pages about the beauties of the place. But I would not tire you

. Talking about ladies, you would not have thought, I dare say, that I would mix freely with them. You all thought—at least, seemed to think that I was a horrid bear, did you not? Well, I regret to say that I returned the compliment and thought that you were all so ridiculous?

You will see me quite a changed man, I expect, whether for better or for worse, I would not undertake now to say—when I come back to you. Whatever else I may not be able to accomplish, I will not, while here, do anything to disgrace myself

Did you really think, honestly tell me, that I shall ever be able to go to Oxford and study there? I am quite sure that you thought, with others, that my career was over. That is what a good many thought and still think, I am sure. But with the help of God, you will find me coming up again and perhaps at the top of the tree. These foolish thoughts of mine are uttered only to those whom I love. I always write like this to my wife, but hardly to any one else."

He did come to the top of the tree. He had the honour of being the first Judge in the highest courts of Cochin and Travancore. The judgments that adorn the pages of the law reports of these two States fully bear out his legal erudition and literary scholarship. But for the fact that, on the advice of one or two

individuals who were not well disposed to Mr. A. R. Banerji, the Dewan, he refused a timely request to take a place on the Chief Court Bench, he could have retired as the Dewan of Cochin. As wanted by Mr. Banerji and my master, I even went and made a personal request to him to accept the place. He did not.

Even before that incident, I had noticed a coldness in his behaviour towards me. After that, I felt it became worse. While at Trivandrum, he never wrote to me. I, on my part, never troubled him with my presence or my letters. Some time after he retired from the Travancore service, he came to Ernakulam and took up his residence in a rented building near Ravipuram. It was the time when my son Sankaran was preparing to go to England for a course of studies there. He went to see Mr. Rama Menon. It seems he told my son, "Kunhi Krishnan is mad that you should be asked to go to England to study English!", not knowing that it was Prof. Candeth who had sketched the course for him. But that is not my point. It was from my son that I first heard of Mr. Rama Menon's arrival and also that he was not keeping good health. Three or four days after, he was reported to be worse. So I went to him on 10-7-1920. I found him weak. He said he had a slight cold and a touch of bronchitis, and that Dr. Madhava Menon, the Civil Surgeon of Cochin, had prescribed certain medicines to remove them. That doctor was our classmate while we were studying in the Kerala Vidya Sala at Calicut, and was a friend of mine. From that day, almost daily I saw Rama Menon for a few minutes. Very few knew of his presence here, and so there were not many visitors. In one way I thought it was good, as visits and talk would weaken him. On the 19th, the servant privately told me that his master had not taken anything that day and was peevish. It was 3 p. m., and I found my friend worse. I sat by him, talked to him and induced him to take some

light refreshments. Next day, I went to Cochin and fetched our friend, Dr. Madhava Menon. * 20-7-1920. Dr. Madhava Menon said to me that Rama Menon's heart was affected. He would advise absolute rest and even a change to a dry place like Coimbatore. On a prior day, Rama Menon said he came alone, because his daughter was ill, and so his wife could not accompany him. Today I insisted on Mrs. R. Menon being asked to come at once. * 21-7-1920. In spite of my repeated requests not to talk, he did talk of old days; regretted that he misunderstood me and, pressing my hand, requested that I should forgive him. That talk and that request made both of us sad, he very sad. For a while, he turned to the other side. I shall not write down all that took place: it is too sacred to be reduced to cold writing. On facing me again, I cheered him up by telling him that I was still his old Aniyam, and asked him to get more strength by eating such things as he liked. He named a few things which he thought he could take with relish.

Next day, my wife herself went to Tricaur to get a few articles of food which could not be had at Ernakulam in a fresh condition. Thus, we sent him fruits and light dishes he liked. On the 25th, I again fetched the doctor who remarked to me that he could not find the desired improvement in the patient. On the 30th, Mrs. Rama Menon and Mr. Karimpatta Achyutha Menon and myself were with Rama Menon for a very long time. We talked, and did not allow him to exert himself. On the 3rd of August, Dr. Madhava Menon pronounced the case hopeless. I conveyed the sad news to Mr. Achyutha Menon. After that, I could not make myself bold to see my friend. Next day, he passed away. What shall I say? What can I say? Today, I can bear a loss like that with calmness. But, then, I had not started my serious study of *Bhagavatgita*. So I had to suffer.

I shall proceed with my story, and so go to the next friend, Mr. Ramunni Menon. He went to Cambridge.

Before he went, he created a cloud of misunderstanding between us. Mr. Rama Menon took it as a serious matter and refused to meet him and to bid him goodbye. I regarded it as a silly, sorry affair, and went to see him off in his steamer. However, Mr. Ramunni Menon repented, and his first letter, dated 25th January 1894, made amends for his conduct.

"My repentance and regret for my past conduct had brought about an entire change in my feelings—even when I had not been long in the steamer. Sitting alone on the deck, with the deep blue of heaven above and the deeper blue of the great ocean around, I used to think of the strange incident of my life; and it made me very wretched. But pressed with work since coming to England, I had no time—I am ashamed to say that—to write and apologise to you. However I am glad to do it now, and let me or rather let us bury that wretched thing."

We did; and we used to correspond very regularly. From a few of his letters that I have preserved, I shall quote some parts.

"I am looking forward to many a happy year when I come back and when we shall be able to do everything to our liking. Shall we not roam over those romantic spots you are so fond of? The thought is like a dream"

"This is the festive season for Cambridge—the sports, the Triposes, the Degree conferring business all take place within three weeks' time. It is really a charming place, England—in summer. I do not think we have a similar condition in India. Looked at from outside, everything looks so idyllic. The trees and shrubs put on their best garb which they have been a long time in making. What exquisite combinations

meet one's eye as one glances at the laburnum, a tree very much like the one that flowers at Vishu time, (he means Konna) dropping gold, and the hawthorn and the lilac! I really grow mad with delight when, on Sunday mornings, I lie down beneath the whispering willows on the banks of the Cam and gaze at the far chestnut, while the melodious chimes from half a dozen churches light softly on the ears! I am afraid I am getting hysterical. I only wish I could share sights and sounds like these—I know these are plenty in India and better ones too—with my friends. By the way, what do you say to our taking a tour throughout India, and making a long stay in that delightful vale of Cashmere? We must do it."

Later on, in June 1894, he wrote to me that he found it "very difficult and at the same time impossible to write to each and every man." "At the same time, I want to let you know of my experiences. Do you think it would be worth the trouble if I contribute a series of articles to a magazine there? I leave these things entirely to you. I wait for an answer." I got the *Madras Standard* open its columns to him, and he did send two or three long and very excellent articles to that daily then edited by my friend G. P. He then discontinued them, because they took a part of his time which he could utilise for his studies and practical work, and also for the reason that in an article he could not tell me all that he had to say on so many subjects of a more intimate nature.

"What do you think is the best way of beginning my sister's education? She is too young yet, but still it is better to make up some plan beforehand.

You have not told me what your intentions are as to your future. Do you intend to practise? If not, what will you do? My idea is whatever you do, you must have some plan with regard to Cochin. I mean to say that the State wants some improvement and you are the one man I know (I am not trying to

compliment you) who can really bring about the necessary changes. The rest of my mind you can guess."

From Penmaenwar in North Wales he wrote that neither that place nor even Naples could compete favourably with the varying, variegated colours of a sunset scene in the land-locked lagoons in front of Ernakulam.

At first, for months, I knew, he did not write to Mr. Rama Menon. So I advised him to write to our friend. He followed my advice. Mr. Rama Menon of course showed me the letter and said that I was behind it. Then I told him that he should send a comforting reply so that I might be behind his letter as well. On the receipt of the reply, Mr. Ramunni Menon wrote to me.

"I am quite satisfied with Rama Menon's letter. I suppose it was my restless fancy that depicted a different state of things. I thought no body cared for me, that I behaved myself in a way which I should not approve of in my calmer moments. If you realise how sorry I am for my past behaviour, especially towards you, my dear K. K. M., I am sure you will sympathise with me and try to forget what is not worthy to be remembered."

In one letter, he paid me a great compliment about my letters. Years after in 1921, Dr. A. R. Poduval also once wrote, "I don't remember having had a whiff of home air so pure as what is in your note." "I have been reading" so Mr. Ramunni Menon wrote to me, "Darwin's letters lately. My dear K., I cannot help putting your letters on the same level as some of them. They are so charming, and through all the same noble nature shines. It may be that when you become a 'big' man your letters will be published. I am keeping them with great care." I believe he will have by this time burnt them, especially as he must have long ago found out that there was not the remotest chance for the other catastrophe coming true of

my becoming a big man.

This is the last letter I had from him while he was in England.

Eastbourne,
3rd April 1896.

My dear Aniyar,

You know how deep is my affection for you; and, if anything could have made it deeper, your letter has done it. How can I convey to you my feelings of relief when I read your short letter? Better that such things be left for the mind to play upon than committed to writing.

One request I have to make—and that is not a difficult one for you; because you have already realised my wishes—and that is, be always a brother to my little sister and my younger brothers. I am sure you will enquire after them as well as I could have done if I were there. Treat my people mercifully—as I am sure you will—for they have many shortcomings. . . . also you will write occasionally to my people as you have been doing.

Ever your most affectionate
Rammunni."

After returning to India, he was at first unwilling to come to Cochin as he had been put out of caste by the abdicated Ruler.

"I believe the best thing for me is not to come to Cochin for the time being. But I want to see you particularly You are always my dearest brother—whatever I do. Always remember that. I have a good many important things for your ear—Do come."

So I met him at Shoranur and took him to Trichur where he stopped with me in my wife's house

for about a fortnight. He was received by the educated people in a fitting manner. At a dinner party given in his honour, all the invited guests, official and non official, took part. — as if no excommunication existed. I advised him not to move in the matter, but to leave it alone to be corrected in future, as the Ruler had already made up his mind on the question. And, sure enough, during the next regime, the ban against him was lifted without any fuss being made about it. The rest can be briefly told. He joined the Madras Educational Service, and retired as the Professor of Zoology in the Presidency College. He became the Registrar of the Madras University of which he became the Vice-Chancellor and controlled its destinies for six years in a way that left on it the impress of his great personality.

I have dwelt so far at great length on these two friends before I write, as I should have done, about Prince Ravi Varma, not because they hold as friends a prior place in my estimation, but because, in this State as well as in Madras of our days, His Highness was so well known and so much loved and respected that I thought it would be out of place to speak of him as if any information was required as regards him. There is that other doubt that lurks in my mind: Can I call him a friend? Should he not be considered as my patron, even though he has been all along treating me as a friend? I shall not press this point to a decision, but shall leave it here. But I can state without any hesitation that no clouds have ever dared to darken our friendship, so generous, and so gracious so simple and yet so intimate. Once His Highness wrote to me that though we lived apart, distance could not matter where there existed the genuine tie of friendship: for did not the *Kumudam* spread its smiling petals to the charms of the far-away smiling moon? He capped his argument with an appropriate Sanskrit *sloka*. He

never carried about him any of the pomp and circumstance of a member of the Ruling Family; but the spell of his amazing presence was felt by all those who came in contact with him. Even in discussion, he never objected to be contradicted; his attitude was one of mellowed indulgence. In fact, no one could have been kinder or more considerate to me in the numberless small ways that gave graciousness to friendship. But he knew to be firm and to maintain his dignity when occasion demanded. This, I believe is about the latest letter I had from H. H.

Merry Lodge,
Trichur;
24-8-1914.

My beloved Anjyan,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 20th inst., full of genuine love and regard for me. . .

Some urgent private business detains me here, so, this summer I may not be able to go out for a change. I shall, however, try to carry out your advice with regard to massage and *dhara* . . . I wish you a pleasant stay at Ooty.

With best wishes,
Yours affectionately
(Sd) Ravi Varma,
2nd Prince of Cochin.

For its glorious past, no less for its creditable present, Cochin is indebted to the Rulers and the other members of the Ruling Family. Their supreme devotion to the welfare of the people, their abiding faith in God, their genial and guileless manners and the simple life they daily lead are well known to the people of Cochin. The bright and spotless annals of this family is rich with the lives of statesmen and of patriots, of poets and of patrons of learning, of erudite scholars and of men eminent in the military line.

Their strength is the harvest of beneficent years; and their popularity comes not from trumpeted fame but is based on the loyalty and gratitude of their subjects.

To give completeness to this part of the story, I have to recall the names of two to whom I am under special obligation. They are my dear brother and my revered master. Of my brother I have already spoken somewhat in detail. To him I owe a debt which he never thought of exacting and which I could never repay. My only solace is that he came to me to be nursed by me and my wife in his closing days. Of these I shall recount later, lest I may stray far from the limits of this chapter; but of my master I can appropriately put in a few words here. For no teacher, no friend, no man I have ever known has left such an impression on me as my revered master has done. It may be that I think so because I went to him in the days of my plastic youth, or because of his true greatness or because of both these reasons. His lifelong affection towards me was never displaced by the tripping-stones of public or official life. He was a faithful guide and unfailing friend to me. His words, slow and spoken with meticulous care, gave one an indication of his noble and spacious mind. He took to law as a means rather than as an end. His attitude towards it was tinged with a kind of fatalism. But when he became a judge, it looked as if he had come to his own. He was not merely well versed in law, but he was also animated by a high keen sense of judicial duty. He never suffered from interlocutory irrelevances, and never for once he deserted the courtesy of a gentleman which bore the patent of birth, breeding and refinement. His attack was courtly, and the vigour of a vakil's reply did not recoil on the head of his client. As a rule, his judgments are brief but clear; and they contain a masterly enunciation of principles without being overburdened with citations

of cases. They are, so to say, the result not only of very extensive reading but of very intensive thought. He suffered for being bold in the expression of his views, and also in being a great friend of H. H. Kerala Varma, the talented Elaya Raja of the day. In connection with Mr. Kongoth Ramunni Menon's excommunication question, when he was asked for his opinion, he wrote an able memorandum and sent it to the Dewan. He there said "that, on the ground both of reason and of expediency, Mr. R. M. ought not to be held to have forfeited his caste by his trip to England. If however it be thought that he has suffered in his *caste status* by the trip, there can be no doubt that he should be readmitted into caste, on performance, if necessary, of some slight *prayaschittam*." It has to be read to realise the array of reasons and to enjoy the fine felicity of phrasing. He was a scholar, but his scholarship was far removed from the tracks of pedantry. More than that, the combination of his other great qualities gave him a rarer distinction than his attainments as a scholar.

His brother Mr. Kochu Govinda Marar was studying in the Agricultural College when I was in Madras, and many week-ends I have spent with him at Saidapet where his college then was. At times, Rama Menon and Kochunni Menon would go with me. With Mr. Chengulath Krishna Menon, who was a Professor in the Agricultural College, we used to take long walks which were enlivened by talks on various topics. As years passed, the intimacy between Marar and myself grew stronger and sweeter. When we met either at Trichur or at Ernakulam, we would sit together for hours. Our conversation would cover a wide range of subjects; mostly these would refer to our own country and the ways of improving it. With the Dewans of the State, he moved on friendly terms. They had great confidence in him, as he was sincere and disinterested. He was a discreet reader and

assimilated what he read. He had no taste for novels. His loss has left a gap in my heart which it sorely feels, as it will never be warmed by the radiant goodness of his heart.

* * * *

The late Mr. G. P. Pillai was one of my best friends during my days in Madras. In his 19th year he left Travancore to Madras. That was in 1885, I believe. After taking his B. A. degree, he took up a clerkship; then became a translator in the High Court. Subsequently, he turned his attention to journalism. He became the Editor of the *Madras Standard*, and finally he purchased the goodwill of that paper. He raised the tone of the paper. It became a popular and powerful organ. He was the master of an admirable style which was very much suited to journalism. He had a lightning lunge and a bright blade, but he never used his gifts to any low purpose. Many a man of note began to contribute valuable articles to the *Standard*. He took great pains to establish the paper on a sound basis. I was fortunate in getting from this talented Editor the tribute that I had mistaken my vocation. Instead of a lawyer I should have become an editor. I too thought so. It was after temporarily disconnecting his journalistic activities that he went to England to be called to the Bar. At a party given to him, after his return, he said, "On many occasions I was forced to deliver speeches and to write to the papers and journals and live out of the profits derived therefrom. But I feel glad I was fortunate at having been in England in one of its stirring periods." He referred to the Boer War, the death of H. M. Queen Victoria and the Coronation of H. M. Edward VII. Some of the sketches he wrote were collected in his book called *London and Paris*. He also published a work called *Representative Indians*. There is a charm in his easy style and in the humorous observations

he makes about life in the two great cities of Europe. His description of the erratic English climate is sure to strike a responsive chord in those who have had to experience its vagaries. About the other work, which has been aptly called "a practical guide to those who wish to rise in the world by self-exertion," Sir Mehta thus wrote to the author: "It brings out vividly, by concentration in a group, the extent of the power and capacity of Indians for the highest class of administrative and judicial work. It also furnishes a stimulus for the well-regulated activity of the rising generation. But I relished more than all the terse and apt style in which the book is written."

While in England, he conducted a campaign in Cornwall to instruct Mr. Caine's constituents on Indian politics. A distinguished Englishman thought highly of this work and wrote to him complimenting him on it. Similarly Mr. Gandhi wrote to him from Durban to express the gratitude and pleasure for "the warm and active interest" G. P. took in the cause of his "poor countrymen in South Africa."

For want of funds, he had to remain two months in England. But, after his return, he had high hopes of a successful career at the Bar. While still in the steamer, he got a fat engagement in a Sessions Case. However, his health failed and his mortal remains had to be closed in an early grave to the great sorrow of the Malayalis.

He was a self-made man, and, even when young, rose to an enviable position in the world. He was one of my heroes in Madras, though he was always for treating me as an intimate friend. When he took up the *Standard*, he wanted me to help him to get subscribers in Cochin. "Very many thanks for all your exertions on my behalf," he wrote when I enlisted the sympathy of a few to his paper. When Dr. T. M. Nair and he visited Trichur, they were my brother's guests and I took them round.

"My dear friend,

It was very good of you to have looked to all our comforts during our stay at Trichur.

It is suggested by several people here that I should bring out *Le don and Paris* in Malayalam, and none is better fitted to translate it than you. If you can translate the whole soon, we can get it printed at once

Yours very sincerely,

(Sd) G. Parameswaran Pillai."

I could not find time to take up the work. But I had already then promised to see his other work rendered into Malayalam.

While in England, it was my privilege to assist him in some slight way.

The last letter which it was my happiness to receive is dated 14-11-1902 where he writes: "My dear K. - Yes, I have come back. I am seriously considering whether I should begin practice here or in Travancore. What would you advise me? If I am going to Travancore, I shall look you up on my way. . . ." He did look me up, and stayed with me for his lunch. He looked a ghost of his former self, so pale and emaciated he was. The weather and worries of his English life evidently had told on his mind and body, and, soon after, he died, and left the West Coast the poorer by his death.

Mr. Mooliyil Krishnan was in his friendship true to me. His love and regard to me were genuine; I could easily gather that from the way in which he talked to me of men and things, and the warmth with which he helped me on so many occasions.

I have been always fortunate in my Doctors. Of Mr. Elamana Govinda Menon I have already spoken. He was one of the greatest Ayurvedic physicians of his day. His intelligence and erudition were both remarkable and recognised. He was scrupulously

careful in the preparation of medicines. His services were much sought after by the rich and poor. He was at times very obstinate, but he had always a liking for me. He was so much attached to me that his wife sent for me on two occasions when she found it impossible to manage him. Govinda Menon's father had come to Ernakulam, and had taken up his residence at Pa'iyam. Father and son had not met for about a dozen years; and the old man would be leaving the place next day. Govinda Menon had not gone to pay his respects to his father. My cousin, his wife, Sry. Lakshmi Amma of the eastern Thottakkat, told me these facts and requested me to induce her husband to go and see his father. It was about 7 o'clock at night. In the course of my talk to Govinda Menon, I diplomatically introduced the subject of the arrival of his father, and asked him how o'd he was, and whether or not he was keeping good health. He said he had not seen his father for the last ten or twelve years. I felt shocked. Then, he told me that, on that day, he had made several attempts to pay a visit to him, but was dissuaded by the evil omens that stared in his face: once it was a bundle of bamboos, then a bundle of banana leaves, then a man with a chopper, and finally a lady with a bundle of rope. I realised his difficulty, and told him that I would myself then escort him to Paliyam, where his father was staying. He agreed. I sent my servant in advance to see that nothing untowards happened. Fortunately, when we got out we saw some ladies returning from the temple with a flower garland and a vessel of pudding. He was immensely pleased, and assured me that he would go with his servant, and that I need not trouble myself further. The other occasion was when he was seriously ill and refused to take any medicine. I managed to remove him to an outhouse of my family residence, where even the small holes in a window he wanted to be covered with paper. I satisfied all his

wishes, when he allowed me to bring in Dr. Robert Gunther, the son of old Dr. Gunther, to see him. The doctor was not permitted to touch him. None the less, at my special request and, after a good deal of talk, he prescribed certain medicines. Govinda Menon calmly told me that he expected his death on a near, particular date, and, if he survived that day, he would take any medicine I gave him. To my great regret and the sincere sorrow of the public, he died before that day.

Old Gunther, though rough he looked, was a kind man. I was a welcome guest in his house. I used to take to him fruits and other nice things. The last time I went to him was to thank him for the compliment he paid my wife. Soon after she came to live with me in Ernakulam, he chanced to see her one day going to the temple. He then asked Mr. K. Sanku Warriar, "Who is that young lady with an oval face? She does not belong to this place. She is uncommonly fair." On hearing from Sanku Warriar who she was, he said, "Oh! then I must congratulate Kung Krishnan. He is a nice boy. He deserves her." When I went to him next, I told him that certain poets and novelists wrote long descriptions of their heroines, but Homer most effectively sketched the uncommon beauty of Helen by simply remarking that even the war-scarred veterans on the ramparts stared at her. He knew where I was driving; he rose from his easy chair, and, patting me on my shoulder, said, "She is fair, I say. You are lucky. Give her of your best." That I have always tried to do.

One of my best friends and doctors was Dr. Chittavil Ramunni Menon. We came to know each other while we were in Madras. No discord broke the harmony of our friendship. He was a great man, not only as a doctor, but as a musician, architect and as a man of the world. He was a man of few words, and never opened his heart except to his best friends.

and they were only half a dozen he used to say. His taciturn nature at times led some, who did not know him well or long, to mistake him for a hard-hearted man, which he never was. "Thank you very much" he wrote in one of his early letters to me "for your kind letter, and the kindness you have shown to me. I assure you that the feelings you have referred are all mutual, and I am sure they will last so long as life exists in me. You know that I am naturally reserved, and so I pray you not to misunderstand my character." The gravity of a case you can read from his anxious face and realise from the number of visits he paid to the patient. Even to me, when he came on a professional visit, he would not speak except when necessary. But, while at Ernakulam, on certain days when he was absolutely free, or on certain nights after a hard day's work, he would come to me. Even while he was in Trichur, we would meet at times. Then we talked to our heart's content on diverse subjects and on intimate matters. I invariably consulted him and followed his advice, and never had I to repent for it. Similarly, he sought my guidance on various occasions. He even insisted on my appearing for him in a criminal case before the Alangad Magistrate in connection with a property he purchased at Alwaye. He twice rescued my wife from the very jaws of death. As a valuable asset, I shall keep the memory of his friendship to me.

Dr. M. C. Koman was another good friend of mine. I believe it was Mr. Muliylil Krishnan who introduced me to him. Mr. Krishnan must have told Koman some nice things about me; for, otherwise, I cannot account for the sudden and close attachment of the doctor to me. He was a very busy man. I have never seen his consulting room without a crowd of patients, to all of whom he found time to prescribe and a kind word to say. He refused to take any fee from me; and even from Mr. Kuppakatt Govinda

Menon and Mr. Karimpatta Koejathuni whom I took to him. Even after I left Madras, we used to correspond. His death was mourned by thousands in the Madras Presidency. Of other doctors I shall have to write in due course where they fit in with the progress of my passage in this life's journey. But there are four more whose friendship I gained during my college days. They are Sir M. Krishnan Nair and Messrs. Parakkat Damodara Menon, Pattathil Narayana Menon and Mr. Rama Varma Thampan.

Mr. Thampan and myself became friends while we were in the Ernakulam College. He retired as an Inspector of Schools in the educational service of Travancore. Subsequently, he became the Principal of the Zametia's College. He was reputed to be an ideal teacher in his day. We were good friends; and, though, in later days, he became a rationalist and a violent social reformer, that fact never affected the friendly bond that was between us. He lived towards the close of his life in retirement as, according to him, a spout-up volcano. But, even then, one could still see fire and lava emitting from his speeches and writings to show that something of the old vigour was still there. I have also the happiness to own the kindness and regard of his daughter, Srinathi Lakshminikutti Amma, M. A., B. L., L. L., who is now the wife of my friend, Mr. V. K. Nandan Menon, a Professor of the Lucknow University. It was my enjoyable privilege to be their guest during my North Indian tour, as a pious pilgrim.

Mr. Narayana Menon I have to reserve for another occasion, for he will come in later on into my reminiscences on other grounds. Sir M. Krishnan Nayar and Mr. Damodara Menon were my next door neighbours in the Samipillay Street in Triplicane, when I began my college life in Madras. Mr. Krishnan Nayar was a law class student and was also editing a weekly called *Argas* or *Madras Argas*, I forget which.

There was always a pleasant smile on his face. This never deserted him even when he became the Chief Justice, and, then, the Dewan of Travancore; no, not even when he was a member of the Executive Council of the Madras Governor. That smile steered him in his successful and wonderful official career. I have never seen him in a temper, nor ever in a hurry; he always created about him a calm and placid atmosphere. While I was on the Nayar Regulation Committee, and also when the Legislative Council Regulation in Cochin was taking shape in the regime of Sir Vijayaraghava Chari, I had to seek his advice and guidance which were always given after his deliberate consideration. The climate of Ooty was his pet aversion; and my wife and myself had to tell him whenever we met, and we did meet constantly at Ooty, that the biting cold and the breezy rains of the hills were not at all enjoyable. He was a good man, and proved himself to her credit to the people of Kerala.

My estimate of Mr. Durgadas Menon is likely to be tinged with partiality, for we were so much attached to each other. There was no cant or hypocrisy about him. He was sincere as a friend, and efficient as an officer. He had a hearty hatred for intrigue and contempt for advertisement. His manly courage was conspicuous in his actions, and, ordinarily, he inspired respect rather than liking. He was thoroughly successful as Sarvadhikari, Secretary to the Dewan and Devaswom Commissioner; and, during the short period he acted as the Dewan, he showed he would certainly give a good account of himself if he was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the State. In whatever capacity he worked, he brought to bear on it his ability, tact and firmness, his administrative capacity and his glowing patriotism. I mourn his loss, and pay to my dear, honest friend my heart's tribute in these faltering accents.

VII. My Days as a Lawyer. i.

Though I was not for following law as a calling, yet, when I was forced to take it up as a profession, I tried my best to well equip myself for it. I worked in Mr. Pallyil Gopala Menon's chambers for the first few months.

I engaged my spare hours to read the lives of the Lord Chancellors, and particularly the speeches and writings of K. T. Telang and G. K. Gokhale, for these were my heroes and my ideals. I also read at that time some small books on *How to Conduct a Case*, *Tact in Court*, *Art of Advocacy*, *Art of Cross-examination*, and *Duties and Responsibilities of Lawyers*. They were of much help to me. I also studied carefully, once again, the Civil Procedure Code and the Limitation Act with commentaries. Mr. P. Gopala Menon had a marked personality even as a lawyer. He had the equipment for success as a Criminal Lawyer. He had a supreme contempt for the very letter of the law. That large inheritance of common sense he possessed he used in his profession with great success. His courage and honesty and his self-sacrificing identification with the interests of his clients completed the armour in which he confronted his antagonists. Once he got into grips with Mr. Norton, who, in the heat of an argument called Mr. Gopala Menon, who had to interrupt him now and then, 'a man.' Gopala Menon objected to the use of the word. "If he is not a man, am I to call him a beast?" said Norton, to which Gopala Menon replied that that term suited Mr. Norton better. However, next day, Mr. Norton made ample amends for his conduct by tendering an unqualified apology to Mr. Gopala Menon who, he said, he was glad to hear, was known as a tribune of the people of Cochin. But he was not of much help to me. It was after the return of Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon to Ernakulam that he put

me in the course of a systematic study.

When I joined the Bar, he, was at Trivandrum. Locally, he and Mr. T. A. Doraswamy Iyer were the models whom I tried to copy, leaders whom I willingly followed. They were leading lawyers of the day. I studied their method, and their manner of address. So, before I proceed further with my story, let me say a few words about them. I need only copy here a few extracts from sketches I have already written about them.

Mr. Padmanabha Menon was the brother of Mr. K. P. Sankara Menon, a High Court Judge of Travancore. They were the sons of Mr. P. Sankunni Menon, a Dewan Peishkar of Travancore and who wrote a well-known History of that State. After his graduation in law, Padmanabha Menon served his apprenticeship under Sir Sheppard, then the Advocate-General of Madras. To be near his mother at Elasspilly, he set up practice at Ernakulam. With his deep legal erudition and general culture, his patient study of cases and his warm but calm and courtly advocacy, his accessibility and his affable though dignified manners, he easily won the confidence of an increasing number of liberal and respectable clients. He soon topped the profession, and, what was equally important, also began to lead public opinion in Cochin. The people of Cochin were, therefore, very sorry to let him go, when, in 1899, he left Ernakulam to Trivandrum.

On that occasion, he was presented with an address, a unique circumstance in itself, by the prominent citizens of *ery* State, including Dewan Govinda Menon and Paliath Valiya Achan, the premier noble of the State.

His mother had died by that time. So, he thought he could go to a place where he could find a wider field for his professional work and better facilities for writing about the early *History of Kerala*. But, the

immediate incident which precipitated the step was another. Once, when he had to espouse the cause of a poor client against persons in position—I am referring to the famous Forest Case, in which Mr. Pallyil Gopala Menon and he appeared for the accused—the Special First Class Magistrate, Mr. V. K. Rama Menon, not only convicted his party but also passed certain adverse remarks on the conduct of his counsel. The Sessions Judge upheld the conviction, and did not question the propriety of the irrelevant remarks of the Magistrate; but a Full Bench of the Appeal Court acquitted the accused, and completely exculpated the lawyers from the charge of professional misconduct. Being a member of the High Court Bar of Madras, Padmanabha Menon placed the papers, together with the written argument he had prepared for the Appeal Court, before Sir Arnold White, the Advocate-General. Sir White remarked that 'the written arguments showed great ability and erudition' and expressed his opinion that there was 'no foundation or justification for the charges.' But the Appeal Court did not, on the petitions of these two lawyers, order the removal of the offending passages from the judgment. Hence Mr. Padmanabha Menon wanted to leave Ernakulam, and Mr. Gopala Menon to stop practising as a lawyer. Mr. Padmanabha Menon sent me to Madras the argument and the order with a request to see them published in the *Hindu*. The letter, dated 31-3-1899, that accompanied these contain these sentences: "You will be interested to read the order of the Appeal Court on our petitions. It carefully avoids ordering the expunging of even those passages in the judgment of the Magistrate which the Judges are constrained to admit to be objectionable. And yet they ostentatiously direct certain passages in our argument to be recalled. . . . The Judges are teaching the Bar to grovel before persons dressed in brief authority; and, after this judicial pronouncement, it

will certainly be difficult to go on practising in the Cochin Courts with any amount of self-respect."

"He was never wrath except with wrong." That mellow equanimity and judicial temper for which he was famous never for once deserted him. He had no tendency for emotional display. His manner, on the other hand, had a certain aloofness which commanded respect. None the less, he silently enjoyed the exciting pleasure of walking on the minds of even astute people. It was in a spirit of charity he always judged his fellows. His was no sunless creed. He was a deeply religious man. That he was generous, that he had a rare feel for his fellows will be seen from the numerous liberal benefactions he made in his last will and testament to temples, asylums, watersheds, educational institutions and to the Ernakulam Bar Association.

After the draft of his will was ready, he asked me to go to his house one day. Then he took me upstairs to his private room on the western verandah where I found a seat and a desk provided for me. He gave me the draft and a pencil and said, "I have not shown this to any one, not even to my wife. I want you to read it carefully and suggest all needed changes in the contents and language. No delicacy should deter you from doing that." It was a pretty long document. I went through it critically and suggested a few modifications, all of which he accepted. The gift to the Bar Association and the Ernakulam Public Library and the endowment to the Leper Asylum were then made at my suggestion.

He remained a student, a systematic, diligent student, to the end of his days. With him rest meant only change of work. A certain scrupulous austerity streaked his social and civic life, and his circle of friends too was select and solid.

He was not only a lawyer and statesman, but also a scholar and historian. His *History of Cochin*

and his *History of Kerala* show that he had the full equipment for a historian: thirst for truth, mental training and unflinching patience.

It was my privilege to work under him. His help was sure and his word was clear in all the trials of my life.

Mr. Doraswamy Iyer, born of poor parents, rose to an envied eminence by sheer force of his intellect and character. Poverty was to him a school to develop his talents. His wide and varied learning was such that he was equally at home in the elucidation of a subtle point of law or metaphysics, the exposition of a devotional ode and the examination of a principle of state policy. In fine, he was capable of the nicest subtleties and the broadest and most luminous commonsense. A great musician himself, he was a generous patron of the art and science of music, and he dispensed hospitality in a magnificent style, in his residence.

He combined popularity with greatness. He was a master in the art of saying the right thing at the right moment, and an old-world courtesy and all-embracing smile were never absent from him. In fact, he was a genius in a class of himself, and easily one in the front rank of the lawyers and musicians of the day.

He was a great friend and admirer of my revered master who held a very high opinion of Doraswamy Iyer. I made his acquaintance the year I joined the bar. Warmed by his lively gratitude for the small assistance he and his father received from my parents during his early struggling days, our acquaintance soon ripened into an intimacy which, knit with bonds of mutual regard and affection, only death sundered.

When he completed his 60th year, there were a grand feast and the feeding of the poor on a liberal scale. I did not go for the feast, but for the other I worked with genuine pleasure. Here is the letter

that he wrote to me on that occasion.

Ernakulam,
15th November 1931.

My dear Friend,

I do not know how to thank you for your hearty good wishes. My sincere wish is that I should live long enough to celebrate my friend's shashtipoorthy.

Our fathers would have witnessed from heaven the brotherly rejoicings of their sons on the birthday of one of their sons. How will they rejoice to see the same scene repeated a few years hence!

I cannot express my feelings to you for your anxious efforts to make my shashtipoorthy a success. The poor, especially, witnessed your efforts.

Once more I try and find it impossible to express in adequate terms my heartfelt thanks to you.

With best regards,
Yours affectionately
(Sd) T. A. Doraswamy Iyer.

Now let me go back to my story. I was not at Ernakulam when Padmanabha Menon left it. I was really sorry when I heard of his departure from there; for he was a great asset to the capital of the State. Therefore I wrote to him a feeling letter. Here is his reply.

Mudavankunnu,
Trivandrum.
24-12-1934.

My dear Aniyar,

I need hardly tell you that I missed your presence very much when I left Ernakulam. You will have gathered from what transpired there at the time, that people there have been very kind to me and that

they have laid me under deep obligations to them. Of course I can more or less understand whom you allude to in your letter. The friendship between your good brother and myself and between you and me have been a long-standing one, and, God willing, I hope it will endure ever so long. You know what reasons induced the present change, and you may depend on it that nothing will lessen my interest in Cochin and its affairs. My difficulty is that I have very few there who will keep me informed correctly as to the state of affairs there. I hope you will now and then write to me at length.

As to my practice here, I have filed 3 or 4 Vakalathas. Competition is very keen no doubt, but not of a healthy . . . sort. Professional touts carry on a roaring trade. Within the short time I have been here, I have suffered at their hands; so that, it will be uphill work very much.

Hoping to hear from you often,

Yours affectionately,

(Sd) K. P. Padmanabha Menon.

Tampaur,

Trivandrum.

3rd Makaram 1075.

My dear Aniyar,

Your brother whom I met for a few moments at Quilon told me that the Judges have granted you a sannad for the Zillah Court, and I was almost writing a chiding letter to you for not letting me know the fact yourself directly when your letter was put into my hands. Here again you see my indulgence gave you an advantage.

I need hardly tell you how much I would have liked to render you any little help that lay in my power towards starting you in your profession. At this distance, I am afraid I can do very little. All that I can tell you is—do your work conscientiously, honestly and fearlessly, and leave the rest to God. You are bound to succeed. You have good parts but not the aid of adventitious circumstances. You can snap your fingers at that, and put your faith in the justice of an all-wise Providence.

I know poor people there stand very sorely in need of some one who would willingly help them in their difficulties. My particular request to you is to set your face against such oppression and render any help that lies in your power, consistently of course to your own position and interest. . . . I know very well that, with you, self-interest will not outweigh other considerations. But withal, do not be aggressive in any way; the justice of the cause you espouse must finally win. What can I say more? I am sorry I am not there now to do what I can for you.

Mrs. P. Me best regards to your wife. Your child is getting on well I hope.

With best regards,
Yours very affectionately,
(Sd) K. P. Padmanabha Menon.

What he said of adventitious aids was quite true. I had no lawyer relatives in any of the courts, nor rich litigious clients outside; and it was not possible for me to think of marrying any leading lawyer's elderly ugly daughter to help me on in my difficult climb.

From the very beginning, I was extremely careful and cautious in the conduct of cases. Elaborate notes I used to take of the pleadings, of the points to

he elicited from the witnesses and of the arguments to be addressed to the courts. During the first few years, for difficult and complicated cases, I invariably wrote down the full argument which I had to address to the court on behalf of my client. Of course, I did not read it from my note-book. By some I was nick-named "the note-book vakil." I never cared for such silly remarks; and I found my position secure when I subsequently found such eminent lawyers as Messrs. Gover, Padmanabha Menon and Doraswami Iyer adopted the same course. They always had note-books for their important cases. I was more nervous and anxious in the conduct of criminal cases than in that of civil suits; and I wondered how some came to do this with only their diary and lead pencil and conducted serious criminal cases with no previous preparation. To me it was an impossibility. Whenever I had any doubts, I wrote to Padmanabha Menon or went to Doraswami Iyer. Till they died, I used to consult them in all my difficulties; and they helped me as if I had fed them to conduct the cases. Once I requested Padmanabha Menon, having realised the delicacy of troubling him frequently, to permit me to remit fees for consultation. He snubbed me for it in his characteristic way.

"You speak of sending my fees for advice. I hope it wouldn't be too much if I say you need not make mention of it any further. You can freely indent on me for anything that lies in my power. With me it is only a pleasure to be of use to my friends; and to you specially I shall always feel a pleasure to be of any service. Only you will have to excuse me for delay in meeting your calls, as there is a tendency in me, which I am trying to overcome, of putting off things from day to day."

My prospects were not bright in the beginning. When my brother left Ernakulam to Trichur on leave, I had to fall back on my resources for everything;

and with the death of my brothers and my mother, I found my position gloomy. Those were my darkest days. Disease, domestic troubles and penury stared in my face. I realized the pinch of straightened means and the deferred hope which haunt the chambers of the briefless. I did not know what to do. I thought of shifting to Trichur. But Mr. Rama Menon and Mr. Gopala Menon were decidedly against that proposal. My idea was that, by that, I could minimise my expenses and improve my shattered health. Dr. Ramunni Menon also was against my going to Trichur. All three not only spoke to me on the point, but also wrote long letters on that subject. For the interest they took in me, and for the solicitude they evinced in my welfare, I felt extremely grateful to them.

Ernakulam,

7-10-1080.

"My dear Anivan,

"To be weak is miserable, doing or suffering."

Your idea of going to Trichur and settling there for practice cannot by any means be entertained. It must be abandoned. You perhaps do not know Trichur quite as well as I do—that is to say, from a professional point of view.

(Then, he very carefully goes to his arguments for that contention. His letter covers ten pages, while Mr. Gopala Menon's takes up sixteen. How happy am I to preserve them).

"If you will take my advice, you will stick to your profession and practice it here. Live on a very moderate scale. You know that art better than most of us, and your excellent wife who, if I may presume to say so, deserves and fully deserves all your love and all your respect, will help you to do that, I

am sure. I have not the slightest doubt that you will be able to make up as much as is necessary for that purpose, and much more. If in any month or months you find you cannot, as you phrase it, make both ends meet, I am here to help you with the balance. . . .

Pluck up heart and work Your ill-luck will not last for ever. The wheel must turn, and you will be on the top of it once more. With regard to your health, I believe it will improve if you cast off low spirits.

This is my sincere advice, and I will ask you to preserve this letter for ten years, and re-read it at the close of that period.

Yours

(8d) K. Rama Menon."

"I endorse every word, syllable, comma and full stop of your friend's letter. He rightly asks you to realise what the state of his mind was when he came here and settled down in your own house, and to preserve his letter as an occasional tonic for you. Your greatest weakness is weakness itself. Be manly even in your fall

Closely analysed, what you now suffer from is a sort of melancholia which I can only attribute to your curious character, combining, on one hand, self-confidence, ambition to rise and shine in the world, and duly possessing the requisite qualities therefor, and, on the other, extreme caution and modesty tantamount to what your friend leniently characterises as weakness. Don't be a coward and think of quitting this place.

Instead of being overpowered by temporary difficulties, you should overcome them and show that you are made of sterner stuff

Have faith in yourself and in God, and everything will end well. I have spoken out my mind in

plain language.

(Sd) P. G. M.
 23-11-1980,"
 2-12-1980.

"My dear Friend,

Please don't trouble yourself about my fee. I assure you that I am always ready to do anything and everything for you. I am even ready to help you in pecuniary matters if you are in need of it. Please don't worry yourself about family affairs. Leave everything to them, and let them manage or mismanage, and enjoy or suffer the consequence. Make yourself free from it. About your disease, to speak the truth, I don't feel in any way anxious about it, because I fully believe that you will be fully cured yet. Still I am very sorry to see you suffer. I only conceal my feelings. Please don't be discouraged, and believe me that I shall try everything that lies in my power to cure you.

Yours affectionately,

(Sd) C. Ramani Menon."

I have disclosed my difficulties so clearly so that lawyers whose lot might be to struggle in their early days at the bar may take courage from an example nearer home.

After the return of Mr. Padmanabha Menon from Trivandrum to Ernakulam, my life at the bar began to improve considerably. He systematised my studies and gave me ample work to do. I began with jurisprudence; every Indian Act I read with a well-known commentary after I studied an English work on that subject by a famous English lawyer. I read many of the Tagore Lectures then available here. The plan of study he mapped out for me, and I religiously followed it. The Indian Law Reports I had to read and

note the references in his earlier volumes. My revered master encouraged me to read the English reports which he sent me regularly. I had such a great admiration for Sir Ashutosh Mukerji that, when he became a Judge, I got down the *Calcutta Law Review* which reported almost all his important judgments.

Mr. Padmanabha Menon encouraged me to prepare and keep an index of cases myself as I read the Law Reports, and also to write short notes of the contested cases I conducted. These were of great help to me in my studies and in the conduct of cases.

I worked in his chambers at least for an hour every day for nearly five years. During that period, I was asked to draft the plaints, written statements and appeal memorandums, after I prepared short notes of the cases that I had to deal with. He read over these and carefully revised them. Even petitions on important matters I had to write, or critically revise, if prepared by any of his clerks, before they were taken to him. The great good that this kind of work did for me I alone can realise. He was always ready, so was Mr. Doraswamy Iyer, to discuss with me the difficult points that confronted me in my own cases and to advise me on the course I should adopt.

His clients naturally came to me for their cases in the Munsiffs' courts. He advised me to fix my fees in the beginning, and never to make myself cheap nor permit the clients to haggle or bargain for fees; and also not to go to any place outside Cochin and Ernakulam for anything less than Rs. 25 per day plus travelling expenses. I have followed his advice to the very letter.

My mode of conducting cases, my respectful behaviour to the presiding officers, and my regular and punctual attendance in courts gained for me the confidence of my clients, and a kind consideration from almost all the officers before whom I had to appear.

Mr. T. R. Ramachandra Iyer, though I was entirely unknown to him, when he came here as the Anjikaimal District Judge, was so pleased with my behaviour that he asked me to see him in his house one day. With Mr. Mannath Krishna Menon I went to see him. Then he advised me what books to read, how to prepare the cases and how to examine witnesses. He particularly asked us not to put a witness into the witness-box unless and until we had seen him before. "I do not want you to coach him; that is not what I mean. But you must know what piece of evidence he is competent to give in the case, and he also must know the questions he is to expect from you. This is very important." I have always tried to act up to this advice of his.

Even as a College student, I honoured the names of Telang, Gokhale and Ranade among Indians, and, among Americans, Abraham Lincoln and James Garfield and Isaac Coates called the "Wizard of Law." I have always kept them before me as my ideals. Lincoln was a lawyer. He set before him certain standards in the profession which stood me in good stead. Here are a few which I have attempted to implicitly follow.

"There is a vague popular belief that lawyers are dishonest . . . Let no young man, choosing the law for a calling, yield for one moment to this popular belief.

Resolve to be honest at all events and if, in your judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, *resolve to be honest without being a lawyer.*

Never take more than a small retainer in advance. If paid beforehand, you must be more than a common mortal to take the same interest in the case as if something is still in prospect for you.

Never stir up litigation. A worse man can scarcely be found than the one who does this.

As a peacemaker, the lawyer has a superior opportunity of being a good man. There will still be

business enough."

I always treated the other members of the bar with becoming respect. Even when irritated, I refused to be any other than a gentleman. I noticed a tendency among new entrants to slight old vakils who did not know English. My attitude was just the opposite. I regarded them as my elders. This attitude of mine gained for me the good opinion and even the patronage of Mr. Thannikkal Kunhikrishna Menon of the Ernakulam Munsiff's Court, and of Mr. Kochu Kunhan Pillay of Cochin and of Mr. Narayana Pillay of Irinjalakuda. They were leaders of the respective Munsiff's Courts. Whenever I appeared in those Courts, I managed to sit near them and to take their advice. I treated them as my Karamavans. They gradually began to reciprocate my sentiments and finally I had the happiness of being regarded as a friend by all three of them. They were very clever, and Kochukunhan Pillay was very shrewd and intelligent. They sent me retainers in appeal suits and, in complicated original suits, joint vakalatnams with them.

Narayana Pillay subsequently became the father-in-law of Dewan P. Narayana Menon; but I am here writing of a time long anterior to that. When first I appeared in Irinjalakuda, Mr. Venkata Rao, my brother-in-law, was the Munsiff there. As I stood up to open my case, he said I could not appear in his court. I was not prepared for that remark; the other vakils present also were struck with surprise.

L. "May I know why, Your Honour?"

M. "Because of our relationship."

L. "As the order has already been pronounced, any argument from me will be out of place. But I pray I may be given a copy of the ruling, so that I may move the Appeal Court to have the order vacated." I had no difficulty to get the order cancelled. In passing orders on my revision petition, it seems, the late Judge Mr. T. C. Krishna Menon remarked

that relatives of the judges appeared before them in the Appeal Court, and that they found no delicacy or difficulty in deciding their cases.

Narayana Pillay was very much pleased with my calm and firm behaviour in the court that day. He invited me, pressed me to go to his house, and would not permit me to leave the station before I took some refreshments. He also offered me a standing invitation to treat his house as mine. He had so much confidence in me that, on a later date, he entrusted me to conduct the appeal in the then somewhat sensational Naikkan Kuppan's case in which Munsiff Mr. Anantha Rama Iyer decreed the original suit in favour of Kuppan and against Narayana Pillay. In appeal, after the statement of the case, by the time I pressed a point or two, the District Judge said that he would like to hear the respondent before he heard me further. He did not call upon me again, but allowed the appeal with full costs in both the courts.

VII. My Days as a Lawyer. ii.

I have already remarked that the first few years of my life at the bar were lean and tailoring. The strain and struggle of those days were severe. One reason why I slightly lifted the veil for others to see the travail of my soul is that these, as unlucky as myself, may gather comfort from my example. Another is to show that, even in the days of darkest despair, it was possible for me to hear and to obey the voice of God. Religion has always been to me a comfort, and faith an unfailing security.

Even in those days, it will be not correct to say that I had no work. For, my fee-book shows that, in the first year, my income was Rs. 846; and in the next three years it was Rs. 1253, Rs. 1660, and Rs. 2250 respectively. One of the first cases which I had to conduct myself was a criminal case in which I appeared for the accused, a menial servant of some Sircar

Office. Mr. M. A. Chacko was the Magistrate. He was an old classmate of mine. I, from that fact, never expected any indulgent treatment from him; but I was surprised to find in his judgement a remark to the effect that no amount of "biggling" on the part of the accused's pleader could surmount a piece of evidence let in by the prosecution. I never appeared before him after that. The appeal was heard by Mr. P. Sankunni Menon, the District Magistrate and Diwan Peishcar. After the argument, just before I resumed my seat, I submitted, "These were the arguments that I addressed before the lower court which has characterized them as "biggling". I pray that remark may not stand to my discredit." The appeal was allowed and, in acquitting my client, the District Magistrate was pleased to say, "I think that will be a sufficient answer to the uncalled-for observation of the lower court." But, in the District Magistrate's Court, Mr. George Gunthar, who appeared for the respondent, said that "the silly reasons" which the appellant's pleader had advanced should not weigh with the court. At the conclusion of my reply, I retorted by saying that those words were least expected from an experienced pleader who was once a Zillah Judge, as they were suited to the atmosphere of a Police Station. That bitter pill worked; for, he was a Superintendent of Police also. On coming out, he came and shook hands with me and said, "I never meant anything uncivil", to which I replied "My retort too was courteous, I suppose". We laughed and parted. But he knew, after that, that, though I was a beginner, I would never allow myself to be slighted or trifled with. The sensation of that sort of criticism only served as a stimulant to me.

The next case to which I would refer was a Sessions case. When I knew that I was retained by the Court to conduct the defence, I went to the Judge in his chambers and thanked him for his kindness, but wished to be relieved of the work. The Judge was

surprised to hear that, and asked me somewhat impatiently, "Why?". I humbly submitted that the accused was charged with murder, and I was new and inexperienced; any fault on my part would lead him to the gallows. Then the grave face of the Judge, -- he was no other than Sriman Ramachandra Iyer, -- beamed with a sympathetic smile. He said, "Unless you go into the water, you won't learn to swim. The court will see that justice is meted out to the client. So, you study the records well and do your work." He ordered the Sessions clerk to show the records to me. I again thanked him. I studied the papers carefully, looked up law books, and got myself ready to conduct the case. Once or twice, during the cross-examination of the witness, the judge warned me in English by remarking, "You are treading on dangerous ground". I took the hint. When the case came to the stage of argument, he told the Sircar Vakil, Mr. Mannathazhath Krishna Menon, "The modern, young men like to speak in English. So be it. Is it not?" Then Mr. Krishna Menon at once submitted to the Court, "Kunhikrishna Menon does not belong to that set. He can nicely plead in Malayalam. Still, he may do it in English. No objection whatever." "You can argue in English," the Judge finally remarked. I expressed my deep gratitude to both of them for their extreme kindness. The quarrel, in the case, had arisen over a shell of toddy; it culminated in murder. What aggravated the quarrel was the abuse which the deceased had heaped on the wife and parents of the accused. The Court let him off lightly with a rigorous imprisonment for six months, giving weight to the plea of grave and sudden provocation, which were not, however, sufficient to extenuate him wholly.

Mr. M. Krishna Menon owned one of the finest brains among the lawyers of the day. He knew no English; but that fact in no way impaired his ability to conduct cases. Like Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar, he

carried with him a tattered copy of the Civil Procedure Code which he regarded as the lawyers' Bible. He was an expert in perspicuous expression; but no one could pick holes in his pleadings. It was a pleasure to hear him pile his arguments one after another in a complicated case in his chaste flowing Malayalam. He took with perfect equanimity the questions from the Court as well as the onslaughts of the opposing counsel. Once, while he was explaining the nature of the extent and boundaries of the disputed property with reference to the old revenue accounts, an impatient Judge wanted him to hurry on. When that direction was repeated, he put down the paper, and, turning to the Court with folded hands, said (The words are untranslatable.) "It is not the custom to make the *ozhuku* (revenue accounts of lands) run. They can only be slowly made to walk". (The measurements can be taken only by walking through the lands.) The whole bar burst into a laugh in which the Judge too was forced to join. But he kept on his stolid look, and calmly proceeded with his exposition, undisturbed, as if nothing had interrupted the even tenor of his argument. On another occasion, another Judge refused his request to adjourn a case; a petition was put in praying for the same; it was rejected, and he was asked to proceed with the case. Not daunted, he put in a witness in the box. The parties in the plaint numbered about fifty; no less were the properties involved. He first read out the names of the parties: it was a long list, though not so long as the one of properties; but when he began to read out the description and the boundaries of the properties, in the plaint schedule, the Judge remarked, "Why do you read all these, except it be to waste the time of the Court?". "I am very sorry for that observation of the court", said Krishna Menon in his dignified manner: "for, the first question I have to ask the witness is whether he knew the parties of the suit and the properties in the plaint

schedule." "Have you to read these out to all your witnesses?" "Certainly, except perhaps to the plaintiff whom I may not get time to examine to-day,".

J—"Then we shall have this case on another day".

K.M.—"That was my prayer from the very beginning."

He was very kind to me, and would advise some Police Inspectors to engage me in prosecuting difficult cases in the Courts of Magistrates. I always realized the difficult conditions in which the Police had to do their work; so, whether I appeared for the prosecution or for the defence, I invariably treated them kindly. Inspectors Messrs. Pozhankara Achyntha Menon, Perumpity Nanyana Menon and C. Narayana Kaimal had even a partiality for me. The two last engaged me in conducting their own cases.

Mr. Krishna Menon would occasionally come—that was a rare honour he paid to any—to my place, and squat on the front verandah with a pewter box of chewing materials by his side. I only stood before him. And then he would go on talking on a variety of subjects—local politics, domestic matters, idiosyncracies of judges and ways to surmount or circumvent them and so on and so on. To hear him so discourse, was a treat.

The first original suit that I conducted in the District Court was the gift of Mr. Kozhikote Krishna Menon. I knew him from Calicut. He was an intimate friend of my revered master Mr. Narayana Marar. From Calicut he migrated to this State for practice and set up office at Ernakulam. Though somewhat indolent in his habits, he was a brilliant advocate. He took a brotherly interest in me. He knew somehow that even my stomach got upset when I lost a case, which, according to me, I should have won. So, one day he told Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon in my hearing, "Aniyan is not fit to be a vakil. I hear he loses his appetite and gets no sleep when he does not win his

case. He should take a lesson from his two friends (—we knew whom he meant—) who have the knack of advertising themselves even on their defeats." Mr. Padmanabha Menon then remarked to me, "You *must* be anxious over the cause of your clients. You need not go about talking over your losses and gains."

What Mr. Krishna Menon said was a fact. That state of my mind was not confined to the loss of any case of mine; but it extended to the sad plight of my country. When things went wrong in the State, I got sleepless nights. I would be thinking of the ways and means of improving the condition of my motherland, though these may be beyond the province of practical politics and my power to put into force. Gradually, I got used to the ways of the world and to my helplessness in righting matters after my plan or wish.

Once Mr. K. Krishna Menon was arguing an appeal before the District Judge. As he was closing, the judge interrupted him with a question which evidently showed he was not closely following the argument. Whether or not he was dozing, or doting on some cases, with which he wanted to embellish his judgment is more than what I can say. At once, Krishna Menon sat down. When asked for the reason, he calmly submitted, "I give up the effort in reverential despair. It looked like asking how Rama was related to Sita after reading through *Ramayana*." The judge apologised, and Krishna Menon argued the case afresh. His humour had an antiseptic touch about it. The last time he appeared was in a Sessions Case in which I had asked the parties to engage him. We appeared together; and I read the papers to him at home. On the last day, we had to examine a barber before we started the argument. I was asked to examine the witness. When I sat down, he praised me saying, "That is a clean shave, Aniyan." Then he began the speech. He began brilliantly; but he did not go far, when we saw him

leaning to one side as if he was getting unconscious. At once a few of us caught hold of him and had him carried to his residence. It was a stroke of paralysis from which he did not recover. He owned a splendid physique that could afford to laugh at toil. But an economy of worry was part of his practical program in his worldly career, and he sauntered through life in a buoyant mood without much strain to his mental vigour. Old age has not expelled my admiration for him which has taken me far from the first civil case I had to conduct all alone in the District Court.

It was known as the Kavata Panikkar's case. The abdicated Ruler was rightly anxious to assess all untaxed lands, if their holders could not show the original grant or fortify their privileges with clear, cogent evidence. In ancient times, the Kavata family had to furnish units for the body-guard of the Ruler. The members of that force had always to be ready to lay down their lives for their sovereign, and so were given lands (free from all taxes) on *chavettavirathi* tenure. The word means, grant of land for the readiness or promise to die. These lands were brought under assessment; and it was to set that aside and to declare it free from tax that the suit was brought. Not only law but also history helped me to win the case. The Chandur Panikkar's case was also filed to secure a similar relief, but on other grounds. The Chandur family is a branch of my father's Nanthikkara family. The Sircar Vakil who conducted the case was Mr. T. M. Krishna Menon. My clients could not produce the original grant by which they were exempted from the exaction; but they knew its copy was in the Eduvaippu, the Central Record Office. To the summons to produce it, issued several times, there was no response. One day, the Curator of the Record Office chanced to be in court. By an urgent petition I moved the court that he might be asked as to why it was not produced. It was only when he

went into the witness-box that Mr. Krishna Menon was told of my petition and the nature of the prayer in it. The Curator was innocent of the facts of the case, and so he deposed on oath before the court that the records called for had been sent long ago to the Sirkar Vakil. Because of the non-production of the papers by the Sirkar, I satisfied myself with the examination of the Karanavan of the family and a nominal witness or two. In the District Court and the Appeal Court, my clients won the case with full costs. Mr. Krishna Menon was very vehement in the conduct of the case, so much so that the judge, Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, thought that we two were not on the best of terms. So he remarked to the Bench clerk, "To remove this very wrong impression, we hit upon an artifice. One evening, we returned home in my push-push which we had of ached just behind the jutka of the judge; and we / sked and laughed over the day's doings. This procedure had its desired effect. To quote the words of Lord Asquith about the life of lawyers, "Our life is spent in constant and unceasing conflicts. But the arduous struggle, the blows given and received, the exaltation of victory, the sting of defeat, our daily experience, far from breeding division and illwill, only bind us more closely by the ties of a comradeship for which you would look in vain in any arena of the ambitious and revalries of men." How true when neatly fought and in a moral fashion. This chapter may be closed with a look on another aspect of a lawyer's life as told in Mr. Eardley Norton's words: "The courtesy of counsel often under great restraint is a lesson in deportment. To be forced to call a person learned and to honour one whom you secretly knew as the emptiest of noisy men is an education in selfcontrol."

VII. My days as a Lawyer. iii.

"There is now a perceptible diminution of work in

all the courts; and the rate in the fees as remuneration is also considerably reduced. Economic derpression is, perchance, answerable for these. There is the other fact too which has made the lot of lawyers not a profitable one in these days: it will not be far wrong if one were to say that, with a few exceptions, all the villages of the State are yearly adding their contribution of advocates to the bar. It was not so when I started practice. Mr. Parakkal Krishna Menon and myself had the run of the Cochin Munsiff's Court. Munsiff Mr. Anantarama Iyer in no small measure contributed to this piece of our luck. He was impatient and easily irritated; wanted only short examination of witnesses and more of case-law to emphasise every point that arose in each case. He was a rotary of tennis, and he would cross over to Erankulsi about three in the afternoon after the day's work. We both tried our best to accommodate ourselves to his view points, and, as I too immensely liked the game, I welcomed the early rising. But there were others, particularly Messrs. E. K. Ayyakutty and E. Kunju Menon, who kept us, during quarter-endings, till 7 and 8 at night. Both these were very kind to the bar, and even when they, for statistical purposes, had to dismiss suits, it was done with a smiling assurance of their timely restoration. So the lawyers never murmured when they were forced to assist the course of justice even on stormy nights.

Messrs. Pattathil Narayana Menon, E. K. Ayyakutty and T. V. Ramalinga Iyer were my intimate friends; Mr. Kannachandran Iyer and Mr. V. K. Kochuni Menon I treated with avuncular respect. But, like some others, I never paraded our friendship in public, nor advertised it to procure custom. Mr. Narayana Menon and myself were on terms of intimacy from our college days. He, for some time, assisted me in editing *Vidya Vinodini*, and co-operated with me in forming a Ladies' Association and a

Karayogam in Ernakulam. When he became a judge of the local court, I particularly warned him not to visit me frequently. He and Mr. Ramalinga Iyer would generally come to me only at about 8 at night. Even Mrs. Narayana Menon (Sry. Kalyanikutty Amma) was, till her husband became ill and had his leg amputated, a stranger to the strength of the attachment that existed between Mr. Narayana Menon and myself. She remarked to my wife, "Of this sort of friendship, I have only read in *Purnas*." She was the daughter of Sub-judge Chandu Menon, the author of *Indulekha*. She was an intelligent and educated lady. She was well-versed in Sanskrit and was, besides, a good conversationalist. She and her father had a hearty laugh when, on the occasion of my friend's marriage to her, I congratulated him on getting a talented wife and falsifying the veracity of a familiar quip:

"What a pity!
Calicut city,
None to marry,
Kalyanikutty."

Even before Mr. Chandu Menon and myself came to know each other personally, he wrote to me letters about my literary work and presented me with a copy of his sumptuous edition of *Mayurasandesam*. And, when we met for the first time from Madras, he began the talk by remarking, with reference to the congenital squint from which both of us suffered, "Haigh! Krishna Menon! There are several points of similarity between us."

I was able to dissemble my friendship to Mr. Ramalinga Iyer so well that, when a party was arranged to honour him, there was a talk among the promoters of that movement as to the propriety of approaching me to propose his toast on the occasion, as we two were not on the best of terms. Some one,

who was in the know of the real state of things, tried to remove their wrong impression which was completely dispelled on their hearing my speech.

Mr. Ramachandra Iyer never knew how to hide his thoughts. The deepening redness on his cheeks was an indication of his rising anger, while his generous smile was a sign of the happy mood within. He hated falsehood in all its varied aspects.

Once he introduced me to Sir Sivaswami Iyer in very flattering terms, and, when I last paid my respects to him on his sick-bed, he spoke about me to his relatives that were attending on him in terms of true affection. My eyes showed my appreciation and my gratitude, and he gave me a fatherly blessing when I took leave of him.

Vakil Mr. Parameswaran Pillai once began his reply in an appeal suit by observing that several points pressed by me, (the appellant's pleader,) were not borne out by the records in the case. Judge Ramachandra Iyer at once cut him short with the remark, "All right, go on please. I know Mr. Krishnan Menon will not go beyond the four corners of his papers." As a matter of fact, I was able to show to the other side that the two or three instances he quoted to illustrate his contention were all based on the facts, the recorded evidence of the suit.

On another occasion, Mr. Doraswami Iyer and Mr. Padmanabha Menon were arguing an appeal in which the only point that was pressed was the value of improvements, which again turned on the age of an house. "Why was no commission taken out in the lower court? His report would have been the best evidence on the point. If you will agree as to a commissioner,—for, no further evidence I shall record here,—I shall have his report on the file." They both selected me. The judge, it was no other than Mr. Ramachandrier, in asking me to go at once to the place, said, "Never mind the small fee, Mr. Krishna

Menon. It is an honour that both should have agreed to send you on this work." I rose and bowed to the court.

I never wished to go out on commissions, and so had no need to wait on judges for the grant of such favours. But, none the less, I had to go on two or three occasions. Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon gave me a commission marked with a fat fee. It was to estimate the value of an old but large *pandikasala* in the Ernakulam bazaar. I went to him and requested to be relieved of the work, as I did not know the value of materials and how to measure them properly. He then told me that I could engage the services of a competent man, and get the work done under my supervision. So, I sent for Mr. Kanakkath Kidtu Menon, who was an expert in these matters and on whose honesty I could fully rely. He, an experienced carpenter and myself worked at it for a whole week, and I then submitted my report and statement of accounts. I took a lot of pains over them, so as to give satisfaction to the parties and to the court. For the prices of materials, I even took signed statements from respectable contractors, traders and timber merchants. The judge, I was glad to note, was very pleased with the care and thoroughness with which I executed my work. Another one that I got was to locate the boundary in a dispute between the Sircar and the illom of a rich Namputiripad. It was a hilly tract in Kanayannoor Taluk. I started early in a large *kevallam*; it was raining and the wind was blowing hard; and, at the place the boat emerged from a sheltered canal to the open Kaithappuzha Kayal, a few high waves dashed against the craft. It was with considerable difficulty that the boatmen were able to take the boat back into the canal. I ordered them to take me back to Ernakulam. The handsome fee and, more than that, the fact that I was an agreed nominee of the parties as well, induced me not to return the commission

unexecuted. Fortunately, I was told that there was another, though a bit circuitous, way to approach the place. This course I took the next day, and reached the place by five in the evening. More than a third of the way the boat had to pass through a narrow canal on either bank of which I saw alligators basking in the sun. Was it not Megasthenes who described Tropina (Trippunithurah) as a marshy tract infested by alligators? The canal coursed through a suburb of it on its eastern side. Trippunithurah must have been a sea-side village at one time, as the name indicates.

The place that was arranged for my stay was a tiny little cottage on the crest of a hillock, set amidst ideal arcadian surroundings. Soon after I reached the place, I had my refreshing bath in the tank close by, and worship in the neat temple near it. The villagers made me suspect that they expected to see in me a grand individual with a rotund belly and a bloated head, empty or full of law. They were agreeably surprised to see in me an ordinary mortal anxious to learn the conditions of rural life and even willing to share with them their joys and sorrows, and so they came to me, a good number of them, and remained with me till late in the night. Fanned by a soft, cool and caressing breeze I slept like a top. Early morning, after my bath and worship, and a tumblerful of fine goat's milk, the like of which I have never tasted before or after, I started for my work. I returned by noon; and after my welcome meals I retraced my way back to Ernakulam. It was an exhilarating experience that I had during my stay in that south-eastern corner of the Kanayannoor Taluq. This commission gave me a chance to enter into the pastoral life of a village upland.

To two or three cases more I wish to refer before I close this part of my professional life. In two cases, the parties that came to me were very poor;

but the reason that induced them to seek my advice and help was a source of unalloyed gratification to me. One was a suit for eviction by the Palliyaramuthalpidi of H. H. the Maharaja against one of its tenants. The tenant told me that he was asked by the people of his locality to go either to Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon or to me; because, according to them, we were the two vakils who, when once we accepted a vakkalath, would fight for our clients in the teeth of clenched antagonism and irrespective of all other considerations. He was a Christian. The other was a Vaniyan from Vatuthala who was involved in a three-cornered fight in a Sessions case. His other two combatants were very rich Christians who were straining their utmost to make the Vaniyan a means for their escape from the clutches of law, where they were for the fraudulent fabrication of a registered document. To the tenant I said that the terms in his lease were such that I could do but little for him. However, I tried to make the best of a bad bargain as he persisted in clinging to me. I so worked as to evoke the pity of the court towards my client when I told that he could expect his salvation only in the Chief Court, as the Sessions Court, however sympathetic it might be in its attitude, would not take upon itself the responsibility of absolving an accused in a case like that. My conjecture turned out to be correct. Here the Vaniyan came to me so that the conduct of his case might not in the least be affected by the wealth or influence of the other two clients in the case. In the third case, the plaint was filed by the palace of H.H. the then First Prince, and the principal contesting defendant was the Consort of H. H. the then Maharaja, the elder brother of the Prince. When the copy of the plaint and vakkalath were placed before me, I looked into the former and then told the Nithyachilavu Manager, who took the papers to me, "This is not a case that should go

to a court". To that the manager replied, "In this way Kunhikrishna Menon will say. To that you may answer that Consort is a defendant". So H. H. has ordered me to inform you". I said I accepted the brief on the distinct understanding that I would not take anything for my fee or expenses. The imposition of the condition was the result of my admiration for H. H. the Maharaja and his brother H. H. the First Prince and their talented consorts, Lady Rama Varma and Lakshmiikutty Valia Nethyaramma. Behind the mind there was also the prompting to show the parties that there were vakils who were above considerations of money. The original suit was before Mr. P. Manchu Menon, the Munsiff of Irinjalakuday. I had to appear before him a dozen times. I won the case both there and in the District Court where the plaintiff appealed against the decision of the lower court. About ten years later, there were three similar suits. In these too, I appeared for the consort and won the cases in the two lower courts. I thought these cases were stronger than the previous one, as the consorts' contentions were fully supported by the reports of Messrs. K. P. Kannan Nair and A. Madhava Prabhu. But, somehow, the Chief Court reversed the findings of the two lower courts on facts! M. Kannan Nair afterwards became the Secretary to the Government; so too Mr. Madhava Prabhu. Comment is needless.

Mr. Manchu Menon was a clever but peculiar sort of man. He easily got to the core of a case, and could shrewdly sift truth from falsehood without much difficulty. The art of taking down depositions he had reduced to perfection, and, ordinarily, even the longest ones would not cover more than a couple of pages—and he wrote a large, legible hand. Similarly, he had cultivated the process of irritating people by his jocular remarks. Somehow he accorded me

an attention which I did not refer to my legal erudition but to the mode in which I accommodated to his idiosyncrasies. Even me he did not spare: for the matter of that, he did not spare or care for anybody. Once over an issue, I was asked to draft by the court, he asked, "Is that correct English?" He thought that question would hurt my vanity. I softly replied, "I thought we are here for law and not literature." "No, no. I only asked for information," he said, to which I replied with an assumed air of gravity, "I too am *humbly* submitting my answer to the *learned* question of the court". On another occasion, I thought he was having his constitutional noon-day nap, and so I repeated my argument. "Why do you repeat?" he asked me. "I am sorry; but, anyway, repetition is the mother of retention". He laughed, and I proceeded with my argument. I took these in good part; but there were others who did not. Consequently, a petition was presented to the Chief Court against him by certain vakils in which they pictured every feeble failing of his to produce the desired effect. Mr. Manchu Menon was not the man to approach an affront like that with collected nerves. He blazed with the fire of battle, and began to collect materials to malign every lawyer who had taken part in the presentation of the petition.

One night, he sent one of his confidants to request me to go to him. I asked the messenger what business his master had with me in that unearthly hour? "Further, the proper way for him is to come to me." When the man left, my wife began to persuade me to go, especially as he was in difficulties. I sarcastically told her that she was taking his side because he was her karnavan's son-in-law; for his wife was judge Mr. T. C. Krishna Menon's daughter. It was his daughter that my son married on a later day. However, I did go. When I was announced, he came down and

profusely apologised for the incivility of his man; for, said he, "I only asked him to know what time would suit you for a consultation." I cut him short by remarking, "Let all that go. Is there anything that I can do for you?" Then he took me to his private room and told me all that which culminated in the petition; which he then read out to me, and also the lengthy explanation he had got ready for submission to the Chief Court. This last contained a slashing criticism of the conduct of a few of those who, according to him, had conspired to work out his ruin. I took with me the petition and the explanation, re-wrote the latter so as to eliminate all abuse and to give it the appearance of a dignified memorandum. I took the papers to Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon who approved my statement, and asked me to advise Mr. Munchu Menon to destroy his explanation which would only land him in further difficulties. He had a fair case, and so he was left unscathed. He tried to pay me for my work; I treated the offer with disdain. That had one good effect; he began to speak very highly of me to everyone of his friends and relatives.

I never worked for fee alone. My inflexible rule of life has been not to take up any work to which I could not pay my best attention. That principle guided my professional work also. I tried to absorb myself in the cases of my clients. No labour I spared. With eagerness and anxiety I watched the vicissitudes of every case. My clients came to realise that the pain and sorrow and anxiety which racked them were shared by me as well. My clients knew it. The Bórah's and Baniyas of Mattanchery would invariably say, "If you entrust your case to Thottakkat, (I went by my house-name amongst many of them) you may go to sleep. Only your agents must help him in due time with necessary records and witnesses. Else he will be on fire." Once Prof. Mangesh Rao of the

Presidency College had a case in Cochin. It was a tough case, and there was no one to assist me, he being far away. I had an uphill work. "I do not know", so he wrote to me after the close of the case, "how to sufficiently thank you for all the trouble you have taken in bringing the suit to a thoroughly successful issue." Again he wrote to me in these terms, "I am not one of those who think that everything, even friendship and regard, can be bought for money, and I know that a man of your position would not have worked so hard for me had it been simply for what I might pay. My indebtedness to you is life-long, and I hope you will look upon me as a friend, though my friendship may not be of any great service to you."

Yet from another letter I wish to quote one sentence. The writer was the Sarvadhikariakar to His Highness the Maharaja who demised from Madras. "The result of the L. A. case is distinctly creditable to you, and I am to convey to you His Highness' gracious appreciation of your untiring endeavours in the matter."

Ever since the stewardship of the Koodalmanickam Devaswam affairs of the present Thachudaya Kaimal, I was, more or less, the legal advisor of that institution. He was so pleased with my work that he insisted on my taking up the place of the Superintendent of the Devaswam on a comparatively handsome salary. When I regretfully declined the offer, he wanted me to select a man for the place, which I did. Again, when an enquiry was instituted against him with a view to debar him from his office, because he married, changed his residence and went out of the *samketham*, he engaged me to conduct his case. The Commissioners appointed by the Political Agent, who is the supervising authority of the Devaswam and before whom the Nambutiris presented their petition, were a Judge of the Chief Court of Cochin, and the

Devaswam Commissioner of the Travancore State, Both were Brahmin gentlemen. For the argument, on my insistence, he took in another lawyer, Rao-Bahadur T. S. Narayana Iyer, a good friend of mine, who adorned the High Court Bench of this State. The evidence was so clear and convincing that both of us entertained no doubt that, on all the three counts, the Commissioners could not come to a conclusion other than fully favourable to our client. So they came,—that was what I heard. Sir Sivaswamy Iyer once wrote to me on this subject: “As regards the Kudalmanikkam temple, the controversy involves an interstate and a religious issue. It is very unfortunate that the two issues have got mixed up and created tension between the two States. The possession by one State of a power of interference or control over a temple in another State must be a continual source of friction and bickering. If I were the Viceroy, I would exercise my power of paramountcy by directing Cochin to buy off the rights of Travancore on payment of reasonable compensation.”

During the Diwanship of Sir A. R. Bancroft, to consider the terms and conditions under which a Tenancy Regulation might be brought into force in Cochin, he constituted a strong Committee. The tenants were permitted to nominate their representative to press their claims before that body. It was a source of genuine joy to me that, at a large meeting, under the presidency of Mr. K. K. Chacko, Bar-at-law, held at Trichur, of the tenants of the State, they unanimously selected me as their member of that Committee. I did my best to justify their choice; and I was glad to hear that the tenants were pleased with my work. The one important contention of mine which the Government did not accept was with reference to my plea that certain mortgages, which partook of the nature of Kanon tenure, should also be provided for in the contemplated piece of legislation. I was told

that it was for the courts to construe that sort of document and to decide under which category they could be placed. But, subsequently, the government had to legislate on the lines I suggested.

In all complicated cases, I enlisted the services of a junior even in my early years as a lawyer. In later years, in almost every case it was my practice to do so. To those friends who newly joined the bar, I invariably sent a case with a welcome fee. I believe the first to receive it was Mr. Marayil Krishna Menon and the last Mr. M.S. Menon. Again, it was my custom to take one at a time to study work in my chambers. I never allowed these to have their own way; I never spared them; they were made, to their own good, of course, to work hard. They would get any share of my fee only after they had picked up sufficient practical knowledge to appear and conduct cases properly, unaided. One of these Mr. Mollana Menon, who recently retired as the head of the excise department, once wrote to me, "It was in your office and under your personal supervision that I picked up the ABC of my profession, and it was you who taught me to lisp in it I always wish that you will continue to take the same interest in me as you used to take, and kindly favour me with the benefit of your experience and advice in all matters." With an extract from another's letter, I shall close this part of my side-activity. "I cannot but express my sincere thanks and gratitude for the parental care and solicitude you have taken in instructing me to the right and proper path of business and life when I just stopped out into the arena of life from the school room. Those fine principles of self-work and self-reliance, active and regular habits, which you by your example and by the fine books you placed in my hands for my initial studies, instructed and inculcated into my mind, I hope and believe would always inspire me and stand me in good stead."

Once I got a clear hint from a reliable quarter that, if I applied for a Chief Court sannad, I had every chance of getting it. I thought it would be selfish on my part to ignore the claims of Mr. Parakkal Krishna Menon and the late Mr. Rajarama Rao. So, I took them too into my confidence, and we three applied for it. It will be vanity not to confess that our attempt was opposed by two or three. One of them wired to a vakil, who then chanced to be in Madras, to return at once. He too was advised to apply, even though he was only a matriculate and had not gone through a course of studies in a law college. As a result of these and other manipulations, we were denied the sannad. That fact did not affect my sleep nor digestion, nor even my practice. On the other hand, this step of mine furnished me with an opportunity to know what men of proved legal ability had to say about my work as a lawyer. I felt glad and proud to read the remarks of those who generously testified to my competency to the Chief Court Sannad.

This is what Mr. P. Narayana Menon, M.A., B.L., then the District and Sessions Judge of Anjikulam, wrote about me: "Notwithstanding the slight defect in the academical qualifications necessary for such enrolment, as a matter of right, I am glad to be able to certify that, by reasons of character, professional qualifications and literary attainments, there are not many members of the local Bar who are more qualified or deserve to be a member of the Chief Court Bar, than Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon. I have no doubt that his enrolment, besides being a recognition of his merits, will secure a valuable addition to the highest ranks of the local Bar." Mr. T. A. Anantharama Iyer, B. A., B. L., who was first a Munsiff, then a District Judge and finally retired as the Government Advocate and Law Officer of the State, remarked thus about me: "When I was the Munsiff of Cochin, he used to appear before me very often, and, among

the beginners, I have not seen one more zealous and devoted to his work. He has been conducting the cases entrusted to him with great care and to my entire satisfaction. He has also appeared before me in the District Court. He has been arguing appeals with great care and precision. I have no doubt that his industry and intelligence must bring him to the front rank in due course of time. As to his conduct as a member of the bar, I have not one word to say against him; but it is my duty to add that his behaviour at the bar is simply exemplary." "I have known", so began Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon, B. A., B. L., who was a District Judge and then a Judge of the Chief Court, his certificate, "Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon for a very long time. He joined the District Court bar when I was the District Judge and he has been practising as a Vakil ever since. From my personal knowledge of him for such a long time in my capacity as a judge and as a fellow-practitioner in the legal profession, I have not the slightest hesitation to say that his legal attainments are in no way inferior to those of any now practising in the courts of the State. He is thoroughly honest and conscientious in the discharge of his duties." Next I shall copy the testimonials of my two life-long friends, Messrs. Doraswamy Iyer and Padmanabha Menon. They were not men whom even friendship would influence to say things that they did not believe to be true. "I had many opportunities of knowing his abilities as a lawyer and advocate, and I have much pleasure to say that they are of a high order. Of his many sterling qualities as a practising lawyer, his integrity, independence and devotion to his profession, are noteworthy. I have always found him quite thorough and systematic in the preparation of his numerous cases which enables him to secure the complete confidence of the Bench and Bar alike as to the accuracy of his statements. He enjoys the entire confidence of the

olients and is one of the leading members of the local District Court Bar. I am sure Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon will be a valuable addition to the Chief Court Bar." These are from Mr. Doraswamy Iyer's letter; next I shall quote from that of Mr. Padmanabha Menon. "I have known Mr. Krishna Menon for a long time, and have always admired his sterling qualities of integrity, independence and whole-hearted devotion to his profession as a practising lawyer of no mean capacity. His intellectual attainments are of a high order He is well read in law, and takes particular care to keep himself abreast of the times . . . I have had occasions many a time to work with and against him, and I am glad to have this opportunity to say that I have always found in him an industrious, willing, well-read and intelligent assistant, as well as an antagonist pretty hard to fight with. He was joint Editor with Messrs. K. Rama Menon, A. Sankara Menon and myself of the late *Malabar Law Quarterly*. I have no doubt he will be an addition to the Chief Court Bar."

We had a two-fold object in starting the Law Journal. We thought the time had come to pay closer attention to Malabar Law and Usage than was done in the past. The quarterly was thus intended to serve as a medium of discussion and exposition of topics connected with that branch of law by men competent to pronounce respectable opinions on them. The absence of published reports of the decisions of the Chief Court was a serious handicap to those of the profession who had to do with the courts of the Cochin State. This we wanted to remove by the quarterly. It had a successful career for one year, even from a financial point of view. After that, we stopped it as a protest against the demand of the Chief Court for payment for copies of its decisions. The brunt of its work fell on me; for that, I was permitted to retain the copies of the *English Law*

Quarterly and American Harvard Law Review which I priced very high.

It was the heyday of the bar, when I joined it. Business was plentiful and we had great leaders under whose shade juniors could thrive. I fear there is now a marked difference in the standard of treatment between the Bench and the Bar. "The healthy, the cultured, the dignified give-and-take of professional life" is, I fear, fast dying out in our State. The race of giants is now extinct; gone also are for the most part those stalwarts like Mannathazhath Krishna Menon and Pallyil Gopala Menon. I also think that the erudition of the older generation was greater than that of the present.

I shall close this chapter with a grateful reference to three clients who rather early in my career became intimate friends of mine. They are Messrs S. S. Koder, E. I. Hallegua and E. D. David. Not only they but even the members of their families have for years regarded me as a real friend. They treat me as a member of their households.

Once, when I went to Mr. Koder, he was ailing and suffering much pain. I crossed over and took my friend Mr. Kolathoor Sankara Menon to him. He relieved him much from his pain. After the physician left, we were talking about his illness and also about certain family matters. Then, he happened to speak of our "unbroken friendship for forty years". "Is that not wonderful, Krishna Menon?" He had a personal charm that was irresistible. He was generous and ready to help persons in distress. He was a tower of strength to his community. The public had so much confidence in him that he was the Managing Director of many important companies. When I came to know Mr. Koder, his father was alive and was running the shop and earning his fortune. He had the appearance of a Rabbi; and his eyes gave an impression of kindness, and mental alacrity; while

the furrows of his face showed they were ploughed to raise his trade to the pinnacle of prosperity. The son, though he became the heir to great possessions and wielded considerable influence everywhere, was amiable and easily accessible. His son Mr. Sathu Koder B. A., retains his studious habits. He is following the footsteps of his father, Mr. Sabdai Koder. He has a sweet, unruffled temper. He is very much liked by the members of the Jewish community in the State. During the second world-wide war, his house was the meeting-place of almost all the Jews who came to Cochin. After his father, he has been representing the Jews in the Legislative Council. He was for a long time the Managing Director of the Ferry and Transport Company till it was taken up by the Durbar. He is still the Managing Director of the Cochin Electrical Company and of the Indo-Mercantile Bank. We two have long been good friends. To own a confession, my wife and myself consider him as a son of ours than as a friend.

The late Mr. Hallegua was familiarly known as Kakki Mudaliar. He was a Hebrew scholar and learned in rabbinical lore. He was familiar with the Thora and the Talmud. We used to have occasional talks about Judaism. His family is a very ancient one. Because of the financial help it gave to the Cochin Rulers in their wars with their enemies, the members of the family were given several privileges and the honour of being addressed as Mudaliars. He and his wife between them owned extensive landed properties in Travancore and in Cochin. Like young Mr. Koder, two of their sons also are graduates of the Madras University. The eldest son is a senator as well. Mrs. Mudaliar is sensitive and highly strung and easily reacts to emotional stresses. But she has a motherly heart; and, for the confidence she has reposed in me and for her kindness I am much beholden to her.

Mr. David is a monied man. We two have been pulling on very well. Though he keeps his own council, I know he has a general acquaintance with several subjects over some of which we, if we have time, used to have discussions. His daughter, Miss Gladys, is a favourite in my family. She is well educated. After graduation here, she proceeded to England and took her diploma in Geography. She has moved in high societies in India, England and Paris. But her studies and social life have not spoiled her innate charm and good nature. To the immense joy of us all she has married my friend, Mr. Sathu S. Koder.

VIII My days among Associations (i)

I have already referred to my connection with the Ernakulam Literary Union, the Presidency College Society and the University Union. In this chapter, I shall advert to some of the other associations under the auspices of which I had to work for the good of others and of my own self. For I have always regarded a society as a centre of beneficent activity, and not as a medium of self-advertisement. It may not be possible for me to refer to the several clubs in any chronological order, nor to exhaust all that I may have to say about each, nor even to name every one with which I had been connected. As a lawyer, I think I can give the first place to the Ernakulam Bar Association. The preliminary meeting to concert measures for its formation was held at the Rama Varma Union Club, on the 15th of Karkidagom 1085, with Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon in the chair. At that meeting it was resolved to start a Bar Association; and, then, a Committee consisting of Messrs. T. A. Doraswamy Iyer, T. R. Anantharama Iyer, V. K. Kochunni Menon, P. I. Varugis and myself were

requested to frame the rules for the guidance of the body. Being a junior, I had to do the work, of course. The constitution was accepted on the 32nd of that Karkidagom, and the following members were elected to form the first Executive Council:-

Mr. T. A. Anantha Rama Iyer, President, Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon, Secretary, Mr. P. Krishna Menon, Treasurer, Mr. M. Krishna Menon, Librarian, Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon, Mr. T. A. Doraisway Iyer, Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon, Mr. P. I. Varugis, and Mr. H. Sankara Narayana Iyer, as the other members.

The Government generously gave us the present site on which to put up a building for its use; and we raised a loan among the members to provide the funds to meet the cost of construction. It seems that the Diwan, Mr. Banerji, did not fully know the actual plot that was given us; and when he came to know it, he was angry against the officer who was responsible for its selection. So that, when Mr. P. Krishna Menon and myself approached the Diwan for a grant, he asked, "Why are the two day-light dacoits come?" "To see the thing," Mr. Krishna Menon said. He took the retort in a sporting spirit, but began to say, "It is the eye of Ernakulam; and, if only I had known it in time, I would have pounded the head of the Peishcar for having recommended it to be given to you." After he spent his rage in this strain for a short while, we quietly told him that it was not the eye but the public privy of Ernakulam, the stench from which would upset the judicial temper of the judges of the highest court and the statesmanlike calm of the Diwan. We requested him to verify our statements by an immediate visit to the grounds. We assured him that the place would soon be converted by us into an attractive sight. He was ever open to conviction, so great was he. He gave us a grant of Rs. 500. On matters of import, he always asked for the opinion of the Bar;



Mr. K. Narayana Murar.

and respected it.

Though the deed of agreement was only executed in 1089, the building was completed in 1088 owing to the warm interest which Mr. Krishna Menon took in pushing it through. With the exception of a few months in 1088, when Mr. P. J. Varugis was the Secretary, I was its Secretary till 1093. In those days, no one went about canvassing for votes for places on Committees. On the other hand, when once I requested, my diary shows it was on 17-10-1917, I might be spared from the post, Mr. Doraswamy Iyer said that it was not proper for a member to refuse an honorary office as if it were a paid work. I have always taken a great interest in our Bar Association. In its early days, it did good work with the help of the recognised leaders of the Bar.

One day, on being asked to read the draft of his will, I requested Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon to kindly make provisions in it for a grant for an yearly feast to the inmates of the Lepet Asylum, and for a gift of a part of his library to the Bar Association, and another to the Public Library. He said he would deliver the books forthwith to the two institutions, which he did. I too followed his example and opened a section in the Bar Association Library. Though I am only a District Court Pleader, the Association was generous enough to honour me by its unanimously electing as its President in, I believe, 1107. In 1928 January, just to cheer up the new entrants to the Bar, I was "At Home" to the members of the Association, when I requested my dear friend, Justice Mr. T.S. Narayana Iyer to kindly address them. He began by saying, "It is the desire of my esteemed friend Mr. T.K. Krishna Menon, himself a veteran at the Bar, that I should, on this occasion, address a few words of encouragement, hope and inspiration to the younger members, especially the new entrants, in the profession." His address, and the few words that I spoke in inviting

him to address the meeting, will, I trust, attract the earnest attention of my young friends. My words were these:-

"We are particularly indebted to Mr. Narayana Iyer for responding to the request to address the new recruits to the Bar; no better, no saner, no safer mentor could have been found to advise them and to encourage them, from the standpoints of culture and wide worldly experience. There is another definite object for the meeting. That is to help the juniors to dispel a delusion and to drive away the despair that are in the minds of some of them. There is a notion, wrong as it will be presently seen, that the juniors do not get that assistance from the seniors at the Bar which they ought to. If you look at the seniors who are in a position to help the juniors, you can count them on one's fingers' ends, while the number of the juniors are legion. There is no use of crowding into a senior's chamber, for he can give personal attention to not more than two or three. But I can assure the juniors that every senior will be at their disposal in the matter of giving them help and advice on a point of law or procedure. If they encounter any difficulty there, they have only to tell the Council, and the way will be made easy for them. That there would be a bit of despair is but natural. Up to the time of their entering the professional career, they would have been marching from success to success in their college course, helped with funds by their parents or other near relatives. When all at once they are thrown on their own resources and have to struggle for their existence, despair is inevitable in this hard world. But you should fight your way and make yourself brave. I may here remind you of an incident that took place, years ago, in an ordinary, second-class restaurant in London. There three brilliant young barristers had joined to have their frugal meals. Not having made much progress in the three

or four years, one of them said that he was going to Africa to try his luck in the mines; another said he had an idea of migrating to somewhere in America, while the third, with no money on hand even for a voyage, said he could only commit suicide and be done with it. They did no such thing. All of them became lawyers of eminence; one became a Viceroy of India, another a Chancellor and the third the Lord Chief Justice of England. So, please do not despair during the period of waiting. That is the time of intensive study for you, to improve your equipment and to make yourself fit to rise in your line. You may rest assured that integrity and industry will bring you up. When you accept a brief, please remember that you put yourself in your client's place. Then, respect the talents that are opposed to you; and let not your words, your manner, even your tone leave behind the idea that you have forgotten the sacred dignity of the Bench. Above all, spiritualise your work. "Whatever your future may be, keep always with you the best and most abiding gift a University training has given you: The company of great thoughts, the inspiration of great ideals, the example of great achievements, the consolation of great failures. Thus equipped, you can face without perturbation the buffets of circumstance, the caprice of fortune, the inscrutable vicissitudes of life". May God bless you."

* * * *

Next I shall write of the *Rama Varma Union Club*. It was started in 1872. It is, as H. B. the abdicated Ruler once put it, "a place of union in its truest sense for all manner of social effort and for friendly combination of healthy exercise, amusement and recreation." I joined it soon after I settled down in Ernakulam as a practising lawyer. One evening, after a set of tennis, when I went and stood behind

my master, Mr. Narayana Marar, who was its president, Mr. V. K. Santhara Menon told him, "Next year, Aniyar should be the Secretary. He will be able to put more life into the Club and to collect all the arrears." My revered master fully fell in with this suggestion. But, when he was alone, I told him that, as I was new to the Bar, I had to devote all my time to the studies connected with my profession; and, added that a strict collection of the arrears would entail some unpleasantness which, at that early stage of my worldly career, I would like to avoid. He said he was not satisfied with my reasons; but, however, I would be excused at the next election, and that I should be ready for the one after that. And so I was roped in the aforementioned annual meeting. I took up the work in right earnest; revised the rules, collected the arrears, and had a *Kuri* started to provide money to put up a billiard hall, and to buy a billiard-table. A Reading Room also was started. I was the Secretary for more years than I cared to be, and, when I left the post, I left it with a balance in favour of the Club, although we had to spend large sums for a building, billiard-table, parties and for one or two extraordinary functions. We entertained Messrs. A. R. Banerji, the Diwan, and V. T. Krishnamachari, the Diwan Peishkar, at ten parties, the former when he first visited the Club, and the latter when he retired from its vice-presidentship. Though I stood in the way of encouraging indifferent talents, the Club, in my time, never failed to appreciate the merits of really great artists. Under the auspices of our Club, Professor Sanjiva Rao discoursed music on his flute, and Sreemathi Sarasvathi Bai performed *Harikatha Kalakshepam* before the admiring public of Ernakulam. But the outstanding event in my time was the visit of its Royal Patron, the Maharaja of Cochin. His Highness was presented with an address, and, after that, there were illumination and fire-works.

Similarly, to develop the *Ernakulam Public Library and Reading Room*, I have worked very hard. It was Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon who asked me to take up the Secretary's place on the Committee of that institution. As a book-lover, I welcomed the offer. He insisted on running it on its old lines. He opposed every change. This note in the diary will indicate what I mean: "29th June 1915. Library meeting. No quorum to pass the rules. Mr. P. Gopala Menon opposed the preparation of a classified list of books, as it is, according to him, "revolutionary"! Mr. Judge Narayana Iyer, the President, told me that the gentleman would "likely hamper the work of the Committee."

When Mr. Gopala Menon was the Secretary, a heated correspondence was carried on between him and the government regarding the location of the Library in the new Town Hall and about its management. After some time, the government issued the following proceedings (Order dated 20-2-1918 on Ref. C. No. 920/88): "The Diwan must refuse to deal with the Public Library question through the Secretary alone, when he does not place this important matter before the Committee or the larger body of subscribers, and communicate their views on the Durbar's proposals, in a constitutional manner, agreeing to the conditions or suggesting any other reasonable scheme." When matters reached this unpleasant stage, Mr. Padmanabha Menon, the President, had to intervene and to find a smooth passage out of the difficulty, for which he was thanked by the Diwan "for having settled this long-pending question". As a result of this controversy, the Town Hall was not allowed to be used for the Library.

Once I had the misfortune to rub against his grain by proposing a scheme for public lectures, The

first two of the draft rules ran thus: "(1) Attached to the public Library at Ernakulam, there shall be a public Lecture Committee for the purpose of organizing lectures or courses of lectures on subjects of practical interest to the public generally. (2) The Committee shall consist of a President, an Honorary Secretary and three other members; to be elected yearly, from among the first class subscribers of the Library. The principal of the Ernakulam College shall always be a member of the Committee, provided he is a first class member of the Library." Mr. Gopala Menon, to murder mine, then started a rival scheme, because he never liked the idea of the Library having anything to do with it. He called his Committee 'the Cochin State Public Lecture Committee' which was to start sub-committees all over the State. He circulated both the schemes among the subscribers; only nine of whom expressed their views on the subject; five, Messrs. Krishnamanghari, M. Sankara Menon, A. B. Salem and Dr. E. Kunjuni Menon, and another, whose name I forgot, voted solidly for my scheme, and four, Messrs. Gauthar, Kild, Davies, and Brown, against it. These four objected to the use of the Library funds for defraying the expenses for the delivery of lectures. That objection showed that they had not read my rules, one of which was as follows: "(8) The Committee is empowered to raise funds for the purpose for which it is constituted, and to defray the incidental expenses incurred in connection with the lectures." However, the moment I noticed the antagonistic attitude of Mr. Gopala Menon, I never cared to push my proposal further, so that when, on 10-4-1913, he wrote to me, enclosing a communication from the Educational Department under which he wanted the scheme to be worked, I replied, on 11-4-1913 as follows:

"I am so busy that I regret I cannot find time to help you in the matter of the scheme or furnish you

with any information on the subject more than what I conveyed to you in reply to another letter of yours on an allied subject some time ago. With regard to the other points in your letter I do not think I should say anything now."

Mr. Gopala Menon is a man of moods. He worked against my scheme not because he had any dislike for me. Never; for he liked me very much. But he thought that the government or certain high officers were behind my project.

"I have not gone in for many photos, but this one of yours will find a place permanently inside my study as Gladstone's in his Library". So he wrote on the receipt of a copy of a likeness of mine. "I shall have happy and beneficial recollections associated with it, primarily in your career as a model student both in the school and outside it. Hence, the befitting place I have given it both for my own benefit and of those who may make use of my study after my life-time."

The occasional outbursts never in the least affected my high regard for him. Years after, I was honoured by an invitation from Mr. A. Sankara Menon to open a Hall to be dedicated to the memory of Mr. Gopala Menon. His letter is dated 10-1-1939.

"I propose to call a meeting for this purpose on the Sradha-day of Mr. Gopala Menon. Would you preside over that function? You are the best person to do it, being a life-long friend of Mr. Gopala Menon, and very well acquainted with all the details of his life."

Of course I jumped at the offer and gratefully performed the ceremony as a religious one from my point of view.

Mr. Judge Narayana Iyer and myself were on the Library Committee, as President and Secretary, for a number of years. The other members used to be Messrs. Doraswamy Iyer, H. M. Brown, Pattatbil Narayana Menon, and V. K. Kechunni Menon. We pulled on amicably; quite harmoniously. It was

during our time that we moved into the Town Hall. Here I shall quote from the speech of the Diwan Mr. Narayana Iyer which, in 1105, he delivered when he presided over the second Library Day.

"Myself and Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon were President and Secretary for a good number of years. During that time, the Golden Jubilee of the Library was celebrated I was very regular in my attendance at the monthly committee meetings where business was done in a business like manner. Well, in one word, it has been said by your Secretary that we approached the Diwan Mr. Vijayaraghava Chariar and he gave us the building. It was not such an easy affair after all. Myself, Doraswamy Iyer, Mr. Brown and Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon were the workers in that connection. We had to constantly interview the Diwan and tell him that we wanted a building. He asked us to point out a proper place. We went about, Mr. Doraswamy Iyer, Mr. Brown and Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon. Probably I did not take part in this roaming affair. Sir T. Vijayaraghava Chariar found it difficult to send us away without complying with our request. We pitched upon the Town Hall. He said, 'When the Legislative Council comes, we shall see how things can be managed.' He said we might have the downstairs. We said we wanted the upstairs. Ultimately, he was alone against four, and we carried the day. It was strange that just at that time some engineer turned up to have a view of the library. He said, 'You are transporting all these bulky, heavy things and the building will collapse in any moment.' That remark put us under some uneasiness, and we took expert opinion on the subject, and ultimately we were satisfied that the building would stand the strain and that heavier things could be put there. We officials were behind the screen that is the story of the present habitation of the Ernakulam

Public Library and Reading Room."

There are one or two things to be added to the above extract. When we told Sir T. Vijayaraghava Chariar that, after a prolonged search, we could only think of the Town Hall, he said, "Do you want an honest reply or an official reply?" "I never knew there was any difference between the two," I said; to which he remarked, "Ask these gentlemen.", referring to Messrs. Narayana Iyer and Brown who were then present. Again, when he said that we could have the downstairs, Mr. Narayana Iyer was about to consent to that step. Then I eyed him, and he hinted that I could speak out. I pointed out the want of space, the obstruction of too many pillars, and, being the entrance to the hall, the constant interruption that there would be if the library were located downstairs. Then he turned round to me and said, "I know you will never give me peace till you have what you want. So, you can have the upstairs." We parted in a merry mood.

I have to go back to the speech for another purpose. Speaking of the paucity in the number of subscribers, the Diwan said, "Compared with the number of educated people in Ernakulam, our subscribers, both 1st and 2nd class, should have been larger. An attempt was made to enlist 3rd class subscribers; that failed. It is enough if we can get more 1st and 2nd class subscribers. I know when Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon was Secretary, he used to have some method of enlisting as many subscribers as possible, and I do not know whether he has disclosed his secret. When you approach people with an earnest request, very seldom they refuse to comply."

In a befitting manner, the Jubilee of the Library was celebrated on the 28th of 1920. I felt happy in being the Secretary then, as the institution owed its existence to Diwan T. Shangunny Menon, an ancestor of mine. The report read before the public meeting

of the second Library Day was pleased to name me as "one of our oldest subscribers and a most enthusiastic supporter of this institution." Let us go back to the Jubilee. I shall cull a few lines from an article about the Celebration that appeared in the *Madras Times*.

"A pleasant function came off on the evening of the 28th January in the Ernakulam College Hall at 5-30 P. M., the occasion being the Jubilee celebration, of the Ernakulam Public Library and Reading Room. Rao Bahadur T. Vijayaraghava Chari, M.A., P.C.S., the Diwan of Cochin, presided. There was a large gathering of the *élite* of the town present, including State officials, veldts and educationalists, besides a good number of ladies. . . . The Diwan in his speech congratulated the Secretary, Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon, on his interesting report and Mr. V. K. Rama Menon, M.A., Bar-at-Law, on his suggestive lecture on *The use and abuse of Libraries*. The Diwan, along with the invited guests, then took part in the picnic and enjoyed a pleasant half-an-hour. The guests dispersed at 7-30 P. M."

A few extracts from my report cannot but interest the educated and patriotic public of Cochin.

"Agreeably to a notice published in the Cochin Sircar Gazette, a meeting of many of the Prominent officials and leading citizens of the State was held on Friday, the 24th of Kanni 1045, in the Hall of the new school building to concert measures for the establishment of a Library and Reading Room at Ernakulam.

"On the proposal of Diwan Shangunny Menon, seconded by Mr. R. M. White, the palace tutor, Mr. A. F. Sealy, the Head of the Educational Department, was elected as the Chairman of the meeting. The first resolution, "That a Library and Reading room be started at Ernakulam," moved by Mr. A. Sankarish, the Senior Judge of the Anjikkaimal Zillah Court, and seconded by Mr. Krishna Rao, leading lawyer of the

Appeal Court, was unanimously passed.

"The Institution was formally opened by Diwan Shangunny Menon on the 1st of January 1870.

"From its very inception, this has been under the generous patronage of the Cochin Government.

"Mr. Dias was the Librarian of this Institution from its very commencement. He brought to the discharge of the duties of his office a passion and enthusiasm, an amiable and honest disposition, unobtrusive yet vibrant with life which, by his death, have left

"A memory of what has been
And never more may be."

"It is invidious to select names for special mention. But if we are asked to do, we can, without doubt, refer to those of Messrs. T. Shangunny Menon and A. F. Seely as the two who have worked most to start this institution and to place it on a secure basis.

"We have no misgivings as to the great future that there is for this Library and Reading Room. So long as people realise that the true function of education is "how to learn and how to live, and not how to earn a living," this must endure. It will endure as a credit to Kruakulam and as a source of light and leading to the general public, if our appeal for patronage from those from whom we have not had the privilege of receiving it up till now, meets with a ready response. And, as the premier library of the State and with the accumulated experience of fifty years, may it not, on this auspicious occasion, say with humility but with emphasis that a Library is a potent instrument for the spread of education among the people, of notions of noble living and high thinking among them, and thus for making them great and good as individuals and citizens of this ancient and historic

country, and, so, hope that, before long, every village of Cochin will be able to own a library."

When Mr. C. Achyuta Menon retired from the Sinear Service, I requested him either to revive the *Cochin Reform Association* or to start a new one to enable the people to represent their wants and wishes to the government. He pleaded indifferent health as an excuse for his inactivity. Then I pressed my views before my friend Mr. Doraswamy Iyer. He was afraid that our action would be unfavourably construed by His Highness's government, and so he diplomatically began to delay and to ward off my request. However, when Mr. (Salem) C. Vijayaraghava Chari visited Cochin, he was consulted by Mr. Doraswamy Iyer. Mr. Vijayaraghava Chari was outspoken in his vehemence in the delay in starting a popular Sabha. Mr. Vijayaraghava Chari had his residence in the Cranganore Bazaar just opposite to Kunnaralavani. From there, Mr. Doraswamy Iyer came straight to me. I was undergoing *dharma* then, and told me the substance of the conversation he had with the great Indian patriot, and promised me that he would join me in starting work to form a people's association soon after my course of treatment was over. After it was over, I wrote to him a long letter, to stimulate him to activity. In the course of his reply, he touched on this subject: "As for the Mahajana Sabha I promise to make it as my life work. We shall serve the people and the country to the best of our ability and judgment". Mr. C. Achyuta Menon also, though he complained of bad health and weakness, gave his approval to my proposal: "I shall try to run up to Ernakulam for a day or two before the treatment, when I shall talk over with you the matters to which you refer. I may however say at once that I agree with you in thinking it desirable to start an associ-

ation consisting of representative men from all parts of Cochin."

A few extracts from my diary of 1916 will be appropriate here. 24-2-1916. Finished drafting rules for a Mahajana Sabha in Cochin. How long have I been requesting Messrs. C. A. M., D. Iyer, V. K. K. M. and others to start one? Now I am going to make one more vigorous effort.

22-3-1916. A preliminary meeting of a few gentlemen was arranged to be held to-day to consider the advisability of starting a *Mahajana Sabha* in Cochin. Only Messrs. V. K. K. M., D. Iyer, Vardaraja Iyer, P. K. M. and myself were present. P. K. M. was not for having any such Sabha, as it is not likely to be a success!

14-4-1916. Along with D. Iyer, I went to Mr. T. R. Ramaswandra Iyer to induce him to preside at the Mahajana Sabha meeting. He could not, as he said, he had to go to Madras. Saw H. H. the ex-Raja. For more than an hour I was with H. H., who is in full sympathy with the aims and objects of the Mahajana Sabha. He gave very valuable hints about its conduct. It is being given out that Mr. D. Iyer and myself start the Sabha at the instance of H. H. to thwart the present administration. What a lie! I told H. H. about it.

15-4-1916. Mahajana Sabha meeting was a success. Paliyath Valla Achary Avergal presided. I wanted to take the early morning train to Trichur. But Mr. K. P. P. M. wanted me to stop here to attest his will. Mr. P. K. M. and myself attested it. Mr. P. G. M. was asked to be the other witness. But he did not turn up in time. Mr. P. M. asked me to read the last para, (which was not there when the pencil draft was shown to me), where I am appointed as the literary executor to publish his manuscript Notes on Vischer's letters, and also an English translation of his *Cochin History*. He told me that he had made

provision for the publication. Took the next train to Trichur. The draft rules were discussed and passed. Mr. Anthappayi and myself were asked to look to the Malayalam translation of the Rules."

A report of the meeting that appeared in one of the Madras dailies will, I dare say, be interesting reading.

"At 5-30 p. m., on 15-4-1916, an open-air meeting of the people of the Cochin State was convened in the premises of the Baverji Memorial Club at Trichur to consider the advisability of starting a popular assembly in Cochin, and, if deemed necessary, to concert measures for its early formation. Retired officers and gentlemen were present and added dignity to the deliberations. Every Taluk, every community and every interest were represented there.

"Messrs. Paliyath Valiya Achann, Desamangalam, Chittur Kurur and Mathur Namputirigads, Cheranellur and Kooratti Kaimals, T. C. Krishna Menon, V. K. Kochunni Menon, E. Uluthara Warriar, V. K. Rama Menon, K. Kochukrishna Marar, J. C. Kho'off, C. P. Luk and C. Anthappayi, among others, were present. Messrs. Ramachandrier and Padmanabha Menon expressed regret at their absence, full sympathy with the objects of the meeting, and promised hearty co-operation to their realisation.

"The meeting was presided over by Mr. Paliyath Valia Achann. Mr. T. C. Krishna Menon, a retired judge of the Chief Court, moved that, to create a spirit of union among the component parts of the State, to educate the people to take a more lively, living interest in the welfare of the State, and to make timely, respectful, and constitutional representation to the Durbar about the wants and wishes of the people, it was highly necessary to start a *Mahajana Sabha* in Cochin. Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon, a retired District Judge and a leading lawyer, seconded the proposition. Several spoke on it. The motion

war carried unanimously and with great enthusiasm. A Committee has been formed to draft the rules and to present them at a meeting to be convened at an early date.

"The people are glad and proud to hear that their Highnesses the ex-Raja and the present Raja graciously sympathise with the objects of the Sabha.

"The grateful thanks of the people of Cochin are due to Messrs. T. A. Doraswami Iyer and T. K. Krishna Menon, who, regardless of time, money and convenience, have been working for a long time for the formation of a Sabha like this."

In the matter of the Secretaryship, I insisted that Mr. Doraswami Iyer should be one of the Secretaries and the other must be from Trichur. I assured Mr. D. Iyer that I would do all the work for him. But he was equally emphatic that I should be one of the Secretaries. When Messrs. P. M., V. K. K. M., and one or two others fully supported me, Mr. D. Iyer had to give in.

One of the primary objects for which the Sabha was started was to get a Council for Cochin. But it served the State in other ways as well. Its representations about the development of education in the State and on the question of the extension of the Forest Tramway realised their desired objects. When there was an apprehension of the acquisition of the residential quarters of Ernakulam for Harbour purposes, a public meeting resolved to represent their grievance about it to H.H. the Maharaja and H.E. the Viceroy. As for the Council, we prepared a pamphlet in Malayalam in which we outlined the objects of the Sabha and the need to have one. This we got printed and circulated all over the State. We also prepared and published a memorandum on the needed constitutional reforms in Cochin together with a draft of the Cochin State Council Regulation. Armed with these, we held meetings in different centres all over

the State, where we explained our position and secured for them the warm support of the people of Cochin. On 1919-7-7, the Mahajana Sabha submitted the memorial to His Highness, praying for constitutional reforms. It was of course accompanied by the draft of the Council Regulation we had prepared. A deputation with these waited on the Dewan on 31-8-199. He promised to consider the question very sympathetically.

The following letter from my friend, Mr. Doraswamy Iyer, will show how closely we were working together. In his hurry I find it is not dated, not even signed. But there is of course no mistaking his handwriting.

"My dear friend,

I gave 3 copies to the Valan as desired. I have also told him about the meeting.

"Mattacherri meeting will be held on Thursday next at 5-30 P. M. We all must attend. Kinnamkulam will be on Friday the 3rd and there will be a meeting at Cheruthuruthi on the 4th. Desamangalam Nampuriripad is the convener. Cranganore meeting can be held only on the 12th. When shall we have the meetings of Valans, Chogas and Polayyas? Kindly help them to arrange the meetings

Will you kindly prepare an annual report of the Sabha? I have made an attempt, trusting that you will make it all right. Sankara Narayanan (Clerk) will give you all the papers — you may tear away the whole draft and prepare a new one if necessary".

We relaxed our hold on the Sabha with the publication by the government of the Rules and Regulations in connection with the Cochin Legislative Council.

During the regime of Sir Vijayaraghava Chari, there was a strike in the local College. He had no

hint as to the cause of its origin; but he was sorry for it. He wrote to four or five people to help him to end it. I was one of them; and Mr. Pattathil Narayana Menon and myself worked very hard to induce the students to call off the strike and to attend their classes. After a good part of a day's struggle, when we had to expose ourselves to the sun, we were able to restore normal conditions in the College. Many on the staff heartily co-operated with us; while we had our own doubts about two or three among the rest. We took no account of these nor did we report of their conduct to the Diwan. But, when I met him that night, I spoke to him of the two outsiders who actively worked against us. Both these were connected with journalism. "If I were to proceed against them, they will be made heroes by the students," said the Diwan. "You can tactfully see them out of Ernakulam for some time, I suppose. Then an offending paper will naturally cease to be. As for the students, they are innocent victims, many of them. They want something exciting. In the absence of anything better, they took to this. It will be a great thing if you can kindly start the *Scout Movement* in Cochin". He fell in with my views, and asked me to write to Mr. G. P. Pearce to come. Mr. and Mrs. G. P. Pearce, who took a genuine interest in the Boy Scout and Girl Guide movements, were my guests one day when they came here before. But Mr. Mathai could not come when I wrote to him. So, the Diwan said he would write to Mr. C. Mathai to meet him. I was privileged to be present at the interview on 7-4-1922. Mr. Mathai was for starting the movement, but he said it must purely be an affair of the public, and the Durbar should not be held responsible for its management. I bluntly said that, if it is the desire of the Government that scouting should spread and thrive in the State, it must at least be a mixed body, composed of officials, and non-offi-

rials, that should control the movement. I suggested a Central Council and Taluk Committees to work under it. They both agreed to my proposal. But, before the scheme matured, there was a change in the Diwanship, and it was left to Mr. P. Narayana Menon to inaugurate the movement. So, by its order, dated 5-2-1933, R. O. O. No. 6616/96, the Government resolved to appoint a State Council as a central controlling body, and District Councils at Ernakulam, Trichur and Chittur, since a certain amount of pioneer work has already been done at those places by voluntary agencies. I was in the Central Council and also in the District Council of Ernakulam. In the State Council, or the Central Council, His Highness the Maharaja was the Patron and Chief Scout, His Highness the Mlaja Raja was the President. Besides them, there were twenty other members. Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon, the Malabar Scout Commissioner, who is now in England, was appointed to organise the work in Cochin. The Government was graciously pleased to cede the Padivatha Parambar, to convert it into the Rana Varma Park wherein a fine building was put up to house the central office and library. It also contains nice rooms and a spacious hall. On 20-3-1927, the Chairman thus wrote to me, "I have the honour to inform you that you have been elected Honorary Secretary of the *Cochin Boy Scouts' Association* General Council and of the Executive Committee thereof by a resolution of the meeting held on the 6th of Meenam 1192," and wanted to know whether I was willing to accept the post. Of course, I accepted it, as the movement was dear to me and as I realised that, if worked well, it will be productive of immense good to the youth of the country. I organized the office, appointed a full-time clerk and began to maintain the necessary records; put the Library in a regular, systematic working order. With the help of Messrs. Easvara Iyer and Doraswamy

Iyer (who retired as an Inspector of Schools) the Rules were revised and published. Only we three know the amount of time we spent on them. I got them revised by Messrs. Ahn C McKay, A. L. D. Lambe and Mr. Hardmeyer. I never allowed the Organising Officer to relax his efforts in the due performance of his work. Heart-burning I never counted. I had only the success of scouting in Cochin as my goal before me. The Council and Committee always gave me their full support.

During my time as Secretary, the Scout Association, conducted an All-Cochin Scout Rally. More or less, it was owing to this that I could not accept the presidency of a sitting of the All-Kerala Sahithya Parishat Conference at Quilon, and deliver the University lectures in Malayalam at Madras. I was allowed to use Mr. A. Easwar Iyer as my assistant. For part of the needed funds, we got up an entertainment in the College Hall.

1929-11-2. Miss A.C.E. Robbins, Mr. C. Mathai and Mr. A.L.D. Lambe took tea with me. Then we all went to the College for the entertainment got up to aid Scout funds. Mr. Lambe's magic performance was wonderful. 1929-11-17. The Scout Committee met today. The program for the Scout Rally was discussed and decided upon. Every aspect of the Rally was touched, so that it might be successfully run without any confusion. The Govt. is to be addressed for leave to use the lower hall in the Durbar Palace to hold the scout craft exhibition.

1930-1-4. Mr. C. Mathai opened the Rally conference, and Rev. M. Preston the Scout Craft Exhibition. The Diwan was "At Home" to the Scouts and Scoutmasters. We had messages from H. E. the Viceroy, H. H. the Maharaja and Sir Baden Powell. On the first evening, H. H. graciously visited the grounds when an address was presented to H. H. We had a very encouraging reply from H. H. Both the

Diwan and the Director spoke of my work in very appreciative terms.

I got Mr. P. Padmanabha Menon to write the book called *Sannadha-Balan* to give to the old and the young an idea of the good points of scouting. We two had, on more than one occasion, long talks on the form the book should shape and about its contents. With some difficulty I got H. H. Kerala Varma, B.A., B. L., (Aminaman Thampuram) as a State Commissioner. He wrote to me, after he got the formal communication from the Government, in these words:

"Mr. Hopeless—You know I have yielded. The next is for you to guide me aright, as you also know that but for your persuasion etc. What am I to do? Please see me to-morrow between 12 and 4, if convenient to you."

He was very enthusiastic in his work, and very helpful to me. He opened a class to teach some scouts how to treat cases of poisoning. Subsequently, he resigned his post because he was not given the facilities he asked of the government for inspecting the several scout centres in the State. We got the *Gosri Scout Magazine* as our organ. I must here gratefully admit that Mr. Mathai, the Director of Public Instruction, helped me in all possible ways. My work did not go unnoticed. The General Head-Quarters Notice, No. 82 dated the 1st August 1931, Simla, contained the announcement that, "for excellent services towards the Scout Movement", I am awarded "The Medal of Merit".

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Theosophical Association.

Madame Blavatsky and Col. H. Olcott are the founders of the Theosophical Movement. Under Dr. Annie Besant, it enhanced its power and activity. Its declared objects are mainly "to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity; to encourage the

study of comparative religion, philosophy and science and to investigate the unexplained laws of nature, and the powers latent in man." The first Lodge was started in New York in 1875; while the first in India was begun in Bombay in 1879. For Theosophy in Cochin Mr. A. Sankariah, a former Diwan Peishkar, was, in the first instance, responsible. It grew under the fostering care of Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon and Mr. Kenuttumkara Karunakara Menon. It was in 1891 that the first Association was started in this State. Several prominent people were, at one time or other, its members. The site of the present Lodge was purchased in 1918 by sale-deed No. 943 of 1094 of the Ernakulam Registry Office. The *Sri Sankara Lodge* was formally opened by Sir T. Sadasiva Iyer in the July of 1926. I became a member of the Theosophical Society in 1914 when Mrs. Besant visited Ernakulam. It was Mr. Doraswamy Iyer who induced me to join it. On hearing of this proposal, a certain high officer of the State told Mr. Kuppakudi Govinda Menon, "Such a good man. Can't you save him?" I was not surprised to hear that remark; for several people have queer, wrong notions of the aims and objects of this Society. I do not know how and why I was again initiated, in November 1916, as a Fellow of the Society along with Messrs. Karimpetta Achyuta Menon and Parakkal-Krishna Menon. On the 29th of July 1927, I was elected the Secretary of the Managing Committee of the local *Sri Sankara Lodge*. I was in that position for three or four years. Mr. A. Sankara Menon was its President at that time. We framed a set of rules for the guidance in the working of the Lodge. The Memorandum and the Rules were afterwards registered on the 8th of October 1929. It was possible for us to convene the Annual Conference of the Kerala Theosophical Federation here at Ernakulam in the October of 1928. With the help of Mr. K. A. Padmanabha Iyer, and Mr. V. Karunakaran

Next, the Secretary of the Federation, I was able to prepare, at the instance of our committee, a short account of the Theosophical movement in Cochin. Dr. Annie Besant, two retired High Court Judges, Mr. S. Chandrasekhara Iyer, Mr. T. Ramachandra Rao, and Mr. Manjeri Rama Iyer, were among those who were present at the Conference. During my time, the Library of the Lodge was strengthened; a branch of the printing press of the Federation was opened in the premises of the Lodge, and the management of the local Sri Rudra Vilasam School was given to the Lodge by the Federation. To put this on a systematic, working basis, I took up the management for about two years. But I gave it up when I found it impracticable to introduce into its daily working the ideals for which Theosophy stood.

Dr. Besant came to Ernakulam on the 22nd of October. The Diwan, Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, was at the Railway Station to welcome her. She returned to Madras on the 25th. Before the train started, some of us went into her compartment. She then turned to me and said, "You do not sufficiently advertise the greatness of your State. It was an agreeable surprise to me to hear of the sum you spent on education. I wish you will write a letter every week about Cochin to *New India*". I pleaded pressure of work, for I was then the Secretary of the Legislative Council also. "I know something about you from Ramier and Siva Rao. It is only a busy man that will take up more business", she said. To these words I replied that I considered it a privilege to respond to her request, and that I would give the final answer after consulting the Diwan. When I broached the subject to him, he said, "You know you are an officer now, and so you cannot write to the papers." Then I suggested the publication of a book on the Progress of Cochin. He asked me to submit a formal memorandum on the subject, which I did on

the 29th of October. In the middle of the December of that year the order sanctioning the publication of the book was passed. The Diwan said that all my suggestions had been accepted by the Government and that His Highness wanted its editing to be done by me. That is the genesis of the Blue Book called the *Progress of Cochin*.

* * * *

Ladies' Association, Ernakulam. I thought it was highly necessary to have a Club for the ladies of the locality, where they could meet, become known to one another, exchange ideas, and spend their time in music and sports as well. I wanted to make it a centre for social service work in particular. I saw my friend, District Judge Mr. P. Narayana Menon, on the subject. We discussed the *pro* and *cons* of it, and decided to meet and talk with a few others also before we launched the institution. After meeting Chief Judge Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, Mr. Narayana Menon wrote to me this letter:

Ernakulam,
7-8-93.

My dear friend,

Regarding our idea to start a Ladies' Association, the Chief Judge has agreed to the holding of the proposed informal meeting of a few of us on Saturday next in the Public Library after 5 P.M.

Please don't fail to send a notice round.

Yours affectionately,

Sd/- P. Narayana Menon.

In October 1919, Mr. Narayana Menon, Mr. P. Krishna Menon and myself went on a deputation, as desired by this association, to the Diwan Sir Vijaya-raghava Chari for a place of its own for this society to meet. He said it was a real need, and asked me to supervise the construction of a building. I replied I was not an expert nor claimed any experience in that line of business, and suggested that Mr. Krishna

Menon would do well to be entrusted with the work. So it was done; and the association soon got a nice building for its use and occupation.

To these and to Messrs. A. Sankara Menon and Marayil Krishna Menon I notified about the preliminary meeting to consider the desirability of starting a Ladies' Association in Ernakulam. We met on 23-3-1918. Messrs. T. S. Narayana Iyer (Judge), V. K. Kochunni Menon, P. Narayana Menon (Judge), A. Sankara Menon and myself were present at the meeting. It was resolved to concert measures to start an association for the ladies, and Mr. Narayana Menon and myself were asked to do all that was needed to start one. We two met Srimathi V. K. Parukutty Nethyaramma and Srimathi V. K. Lekshmiikutty Nethyaramma to get their consent and guidance in the matter. The former advised us to request the latter to be the Lady President of the proposed society. We persuaded our wives and a few others to send round a notice among the ladies of the locality to meet at the Rudra Vilas School to formally inaugurate a society for their benefit. As desired by my friend, I had framed a set of rules for the working of the society which the ladies passed at their meeting. In the early days of the association, its committee used to consult us two on all important matters, and we two never spared ourselves in making it useful and prosperous.

On 23-11-1937, when Srimathi V. K. Lekshmiikutty Nethyaramma presided over the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Rudra Vilas School, she, in a reminiscent mood, adverted to the genesis of the Ladies' Association and eulogised my services towards the welfare of my sisters in the State. On a prior occasion, to be precise on 9-4-1102, Mrs. Velayudha Menon, B.A., L.T., who was its Secretary for many years and has been one of its Vice-Presidents after that, referred to my connection with their association in these words:— "I remember very well what a sincere interest

you took in the welfare of the Ladies' Association here, and Mr. P. Narayana Menon also. In its early days, you were its moral support. You might not have forgotten how often I used to run up to you to consult you on small details. You will know that I still have that habit of coming over there when I have my doubts. As one who have learned the 'philosophy of work', you are and have been a rare example among many. In my eyes you stand for sincere, selfless, persevering, systematic work against odds." But, in a short sketch of the society prepared on the occasion of the completion of the 60th year of its permanent President Srimathi Lakshminikutty Nethyaramma, it is surprising that the celebration Committee entirely ignored its origin at the hands of its two humble benefactors. I felt supremely glad over the omission, as I always regard the discharge of a duty is its best reward.

"It will be a matter of gratification", so remarked a report of the Saroj-Nalini Association of Calcutta, "to all members of the association and its affiliated Mahila Samithies throughout the country to learn that a Samithi under the title of the *Parvathi-Saroj Samithi* has been started at Ernakulam in the Cochin State at the initiative of Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon and his talented wife, whose social and other activities are well-known to the public in South India." Its Secretary, Srimathi Hemalatha Devi wrote to my wife for a full report of our organisation to be published in the Calcutta papers and in the monthly journal of the Samithi. She further added, "We want to establish a permanent link of friendliness between your organization and ours and would very much like to interchange ideas for our mutual benefit." From the report which Mr. P. Padmanabha Menon, M. A., B.L., the Secretary of the Parvathi-Saroj Samithi,

prepared then, I take the following account of our Society.

"The idea of the Parvathi-Saroj Samithi was inspired by the activities of the Women's Institute movement in Bengal. That movement owes its existence largely to the enthusiasm and devotion of Saroj Nalini Dutt, the late lamented wife of Mr. G.S. Dutt, I.C.S. Saroj Nalini devoted a great part of her life to social work and advancing the condition of Indian women. The object of our Samithi is also the same. It has been so named partly in memory of Saroj Nalini and partly in appreciation of the interest taken in social service by Srimathi V. K. Parakutty Nethyaramma, the Consort of H. H. the Maharaja of Cochin, who is the President of our Samithi, and whose name is a modification of Parvathi.

"The life of Saroj Nalini by her husband, called *A Woman of India* has been rendered into Malayalam under the supervision of Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon. Our President has written a Fore-word to it, and it is dedicated to, by gracious permission, to H. H. the Maharani Regent of Travancore. Mr. Menon has got the book printed at his own expense, and has very generously placed a decent number of copies of it at the disposal of the Samithi, so as to provide funds for carrying on the work of the Samithi.

"The Samithi has appointed Sub-Committees to carry on the different departments of its work. The most active among these has been the Health Propaganda Committee with Mr. and Mrs. T. K. Krishna Menon at its head. This Committee has already published several popular leaflets written in Malayalam by eminent doctors on subjects connected with health and the prevention and treatment of common contagious diseases.

"Not the least important achievement of the Samithi has been the starting of a new institution, called the Lotus Club, meant for men, women and

children of all communities."

Though Diwan Mr. Narayana Iyer refused permission to publish the aforesaid popular papers in the Gazette on account of 'the heavy work' in the Government Press, Mr. Herbert was pleased to accord sanction to do so. "Sanction is accorded for publishing the lectures once a month in the village sheet of the Government Gazette free of cost." When the usefulness of these lectures was realised by the Government, it arranged to supply the Diwan Peishkar and the Registrar of Village Panchayats with copies for free distribution among the public. (G.O. Dis. 3304/D/06, dated 7-5-1931 and G.O. Dis. No. 4559/D/06 of 10-8-1931). When I became the President of the Malayalam Improvement Committee, I gave the copyright over these lectures to that body which published them in the form of a book. I believe it had a splendid sale. Then, of the Lotus Club, I shall put in here a few words.

* * * * *

In the Samithi we had a limited number of members. It was a dozen, I believe. Miss A.C.E. Robbins was one of the members. It was a mixed club also. From my experience of the Samithi, I thought it would be a nice institution, and a very desirable one besides, if we could start a British-Indian Union where both Europeans and Indians could meet on terms of amity and equality. In the public social gatherings to which my wife and myself had the honour of being invited, we used to find isolated groups of Europeans, of Indian ladies, and of Indian gentlemen, all three separate. Many realised that that was not a welcome state of things. But I found no one willing to work with a view to avoid or avert it. That was why I wanted to start a British-Indian Union to get over this awkward position, and to introduce a healthy, happy and honourable state of society. I wrote to Diwan Mr. Herbert on the subject, and also sent him

a set of rules for the proposed society. He was at Coonoor then. On 18.5.1931, he wrote to me from the Elkhill House, "Thank you for your letter regarding the formation of the British-Indian Union. I think the idea is very good and the draft rules seem to meet the case." Then I put the matter before a meeting of the Saroj-Nalini Samithi. The members applauded the idea and kindly worked to materialise it in the *Lotus Club*, which began its life on the 15th of July 1931. Mrs. Bristow has all along been its President, while Mr. P. Padmanabha Menon, the Samithi Secretary, was its first Secretary. For the proper growth of the Lotus Club he worked very hard.

The Lotus Club may not now care to recall its origin. But its first published report referred to it thus in its prefatory remarks:—"The Club owes its origin, to quote the words of the first annual report, to the Puzhayi-Saroj-Samithi, a Social Service League formed in the town some time ago for doing humanitarian work. It was at one of its meetings that the suggestion was put forth by a few, and accepted by all present there, of starting a club where men, women and children alike of all communities would have the opportunity of meeting together and cultivating mutual acquaintance and promoting good fellowship." Membership of the Club is usually confined to married people, invited by the unanimous vote of the Committee. Provision was made for indoor and outdoor games, for children as well as for adult members, for a Reading Room, for Weekly Talks at the "At Homes", for training flocks of Blue Birds and also for holding First Aid and Nursing Classes. This novel experiment, in spite of certain adverse circumstances, proved successful. Through the generous help of His Highness' Government, and of the kindness of Diwan Mr. C. G. Herbert, we were able to get an attractive habitation for the club. The Club

raised the money for the building by issuing bonds. In every way it justified its existence.

When Sir T. and Lady Vijayaraghava Chari visited the club, I was asked to welcome them on behalf of the Club, which I did in these words;—

"We are proud and pleased to have you in our midst. Our welcome shall be, as is our wont, simple but sincere, and short but sweet.

"The Lotus Club stands for an ideal and has certain novel features about it.

"It is a home where comrades of all creeds meet and chase dull cares away. It is trying like you to live down the calumny of the barrack-room ballad that the East and the West will not meet. The Lotus Club stands for that meeting and works for it.

"The destinies of the club are guided by Mrs. Bristow who combines in herself the tact and firmness of discipline and diplomacy".

After a passing reference to the great work done by Sir Vijayaraghava Chari, I concluded with this appreciation about Lady Vijayaraghava Chari.

"Those who have the privilege of her acquaintance can declare without doubt that, though her mind is not cut in facets and never cared to flash light, she wears by right divine the spotless crown of Aryan womanhood."

The most outstanding event in the history of the club is the memorable visit to it of H. H. the Maharaja. The Club was proudly *en fete* that evening. The lady President welcomed His Highness in a felicitious speech which deserves its reproduction here.

"We appreciate deeply your Highness' courtesy and consideration in making this visit.

"We are aware that outwardly there is little to command respect or admiration in this simple building and its compound. Yet we believe that here we have the seed of a movement which is necessary for the future of India, namely, the kindly mingling of

those who advance with the world and yet retain all that is good in their several traditions, who follow truth with an open mind and with sincere respect for the conflicting points of view which are represented.

"I presume to say that running through all, and binding all are those common human affection which, if left to themselves, are the strongest of all binding forces. This same affection with our profound loyalty and good wishes, we now offer, with due submission, to Your Highness, both as individuals and corporately, as an institution enjoying the protection and favour of Your Highness' benign government."

Gradually, the Club began to shed its activities, one by one, until it began to wear the look of an ordinary club for tennis and cards. My wife and myself, therefore, tried to cut away from it. At first, Mrs. Bristow prevailed on us not to do it. She wrote to me thus:

Harbour House,
March 8th, 1933.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

I was at the Lotus Club last evening and had a few minutes conversation with Dr. Verghese.

He told me that you and your wife are thinking of resigning your membership of the Club, and gave me your reasons.

I told my husband, and we are both agreed that the loss to the Club would be deeply felt by all, and we sincerely hope you will not do anything till after the next general meeting when perhaps you will find that certain revised arrangements will make it easy for you to remain.

I may also add that my husband has already made up his mind that, unless these revised arrangements are made, he will also resign.

I hope we shall see you both at the Club on Sunday evening after the Lecture.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) Gertrude Bristow.

Some attempts were made to go back to the early useful days of the Club, but when Mr. and Mrs. Bristow went on a long sojourn to England, there was again a relapse, and we resigned our membership.

There are a few other institutions with which I was and have been intimately associated. I shall advert to some of these before I conclude this chapter. The *Kerala Society* is one of them. It was started at Trivandrum in the September of 1927 when Mr. C. W. E. Cotton was the Political Agent of the Governor-General in the Madras States. He took considerable interest in the formation and the growth of the Society. Discreditable though it might look to the body of its members, it has to be confessed that it gradually decayed and finally passed out of view after he left it.

I shall quote here a few sentences from his opening address which will indicate some of the subjects for the enquiry into which the Society was started.

"Kerala is a country of infinite charm and abiding interest. Travancore, Cochin and Malabar, all have features peculiar to themselves, but yet in all essentials, are parts of a single whole. There is no part of India proper which can compare with it for the beauty and variety of its natural scenery . . .

. . . In everything except the climate, which is somewhat enervating, Kerala is as richly endowed by nature as any country in the world.

"And what of its interest to the ethnologist, the archaeologist, the student of history. . . Philological problems too confront us.

"I have touched but a fringe of the subjects with which a Society such as it is now proposed to form, may appropriately deal. Others that suggest themselves are the national festivals of Kerala—Vishu, Onam, and Thiruvathira—The *Kalar* or gymnasium, that indigenous form of drama known as *Kathakali* and the

old family chronicles or *gramkavaries*.

"There are indeed many rich ores of inquiry to be probed, and the material for many interesting papers to be read, and, I hope, hereafter, to be published. I appeal to you all. Shall we put our head to the wheel?"

Early that October he wrote to me, "I am so glad that you are willing to serve on the Committee of the Kerala Society. Please let me have a copy of the Bengal Parishad Rules which will be most useful." Later on in the same month, he again wrote to me: "I hope, when we meet at Bolghatty next, to discuss the rules with you. I hope you will succeed in securing a sufficient number of enthusiasts in Ernakulam to start a branch there as soon as the rules have been finally adopted." I gave him, when next we met, a list of persons who may be invited to join the Society. All of them did join. After that, I got a telegraphic message to convene a meeting at Bolghatty and also to be ready with a paper. I had barely three days before me; but he had to be obeyed, especially as he was one who took a real interest in the welfare of Kerala. Apart from that, he liked me which he evinced by the confidence he reposed in me. We met at the Bolghatty Residency, a dozen in all. He took the chair. I read a paper on *Matilakam*, about which he and the late Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, Diwan, spoke in appreciative terms. What encouraged me most was certain definite, confirmatory observations of Mr. Narayana Iyer regarding the topography of the place where he owned extensive lands.

That was all what I could do for the Society, besides subscribing for its journal which did creditable work during the period of its short existence.

It is an irony of fate that I should have been connected with the *Hindi Prachar Movement*. For I must honestly admit that I am one of those who think

that, for Indian unity, for Indian constitutional development, a national language like Hindi is not an indispensable element. I am emphatically against those who, for purposes of their temporary livelihood or in their frenzy for political advancement, want to spread the study of Hindi by compulsion and, in their selfish enthusiasm, to try to force Hindi usurp the place of the vernaculars. Bengal will never permit its mother-tongue, Bengali, to be transplaced by Hindi; so too Gujarat and Maharashtra. Even in Tamilnad, how many went to jail when a Congress ministry tried to introduce the compulsory study of Hindi in the schools of the Madras Presidency. We know of countries where different languages and dialects have not stood in the way of their national progress. As a matter of fact, I welcomed the invitation to join the movement, so that, in my humble way, I may see that its disadvantages do not gain a place in Kerala to the prejudice of Malayalam. I made no secret of my opinion on the subject. When in it, I worked systematically for it, and I was elected as the President of the Cochin branch of the Kerala Pranthoeya Hindi Sabha, a member of the Executive Council of the *Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha* and, then, as the Vice-President of the *Kerala Pranthoeya Hindi Prachar Sabha*, in which capacity I had to act for the President for nearly a year when the permanent incumbent was in indifferent health. But, all through, my duties and responsibilities were considerably lightened by the efficient systematic way in which the office work was conducted by the energetic and capable Provincial Secretary, Pundit Devaduth Vidyarthi, a friend and relative of mine.

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There are two very useful institutions in Trichur, the *Vivekodayam Samajam* and the *Young Men's Association*. The former was started in 1090 and the latter in 1104. Both are established to carry

out very laudable objects. The Vivekodayam Schools for boys and for girls at Trichur are run by the Samajam, while the All-India Swadeshi Exhibition is being conducted, year after year, during the Trichur Pooram week, by the Young Men's Association. Both my wife and myself are life-members of the Samajam, as the objects for which it stands have appealed to us in no small way. Though living at Brinakulam, I was still forced by Mr. Pallath Rama Menon and certain other enthusiastic members of the Samajam to accept the Presidentship of the Committee, to which place I stood elected. In spite of great inconvenience, I often went to Trichur and worked hard for it and for the schools. When in office, I framed a set of rules for the distribution of work among the Committee members, also published, in the form of a leaflet in Malayalam, a short history of the Samajam and its varied activities for the past 23 years, to elicit the sympathy and encouragement of the discerning public of the State. As I found the work exacting, and that it needed the strict and firm guidance of a man on the spot, I had to regretfully resign my office. But the Samajam has a warm place in my heart, and my humble services I have unreservedly placed at its disposal. Even after I retired from the Committee, I did not lose sight of it. I knew from personal contact that, among the staff, Mr. A. Karunakara Menon would make a good Head Master. So I induced him, early enough, to get himself qualified for the place by taking the L. T. Course, and espoused his cause when the time came for the selection. "I am glad you are continuing to take a watchful interest in Vivekodayam. Probably you will be glad to know the Head Master's question is shaping itself in favour of you nominee, Mr. Karunakara Menon". This extract is from a letter to me from Mr. Rama Menon. These are two or three sentences from a letter to me from Mr. Karunakara Menon. "May your blessings be

profusely showered upon this humble servant of God and humanity so that it may be a perennial source of inspiration to me.

"I have to thank you, dear Sir, for your selfless efforts, without which, I am sure, things would not have taken such a turn. On my honour, and in the true spirit of a scout I promise that I will be true to the cause you have commanded me to serve. I will put forth the best in me to see that something tangible is achieved." But he failed to fulfil my expectations of him. The Samajam and its schools and other activities deserve firm handling, wise guidance and the generous support of the educated Hindus of the State. Then alone it can hope to fulfil its mission. For the *Young Men's Association*, I could do but little. On one of the two occasions on which I was made the vice-President of the Exhibition Committee, I had to cut short my pilgrimage and come post haste from Puri to Trichur, and delay my departure to Ootacamund by several days. That was too much for an old man, and I made that point clear to my young, well-mesning, patriotic friends.

The *Cochin Rotary Club* with which I was connected certainly deserves a passing reference. The Rotary movement had its birth in America where it was started on 23-2-1905 by Mr. Paul Harris, a Chicago lawyer, with the help of a few of his friends. The founders met in each other's houses by rotation, hence the name Rotary. Its motto is "Service before Self". Each member is expected to cultivate friendship among the other members of the club, to maintain high ethical standards in his profession, and to seek and welcome opportunities to serve others. "After the last war, Rotary added "International Service" as one of its objects, and undertook the almost impossible-looking task of establishing understanding, goodwill and peace among nations by a world fellowship of

business and professional men of all nations. This object gave a great fillip to the movement so that it spread among 70 nations and 80 countries." In India, the first club was established at Calcutta in 1920. In Cochin, we started our provisional club on 26-9-1936, which was placed on a real Rotary basis on 23-1-1937, and we got our Charter on 3-12-1937. When I found that our club had a few slight defects to be remedied, I gave a talk to our club on 20-8-1938 on "The Rotary Spirit." It created some stir at that time. My fellow-members welcomed it as a timely utterance. It was published in the *Eastern Rotary Wheel*, the organ of the movement in India and it did not escape the notice of the *Rotary International*, its main mouthpiece in America. After reading my speech in it, an American Rotarian kindly sent me a nice letter which began and closed in the manner given below. "Greetings across the miles to you and your Rotary Club. You 'Built' on its members in the May Rotary is one of the grandest sermons and right to the point. . . . Wonderful to me that we can join hands in this great work regardless of distance. As you say, 'A decent Rotary club is the result of the labours of its Rotarians.' May you prosper in every effort you put forth." I was its President from July 1941 to July 1942. I have tried my most to uphold the ideals of the Rotary in the conduct of our club. In my year it was possible to hold an exhibition and to collect a large sum in aid of the War Fund. The Club also then started giving monthly contribution to four or five institutions that engaged themselves in doing Social Welfare work.

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IX. MY DAYS FOR SOCIAL SERVICE.

Social service is a never-ending work. I shall attempt only to refer to certain specific instances within the confines of this chapter. During my early days,

I had about me individuals of a kindly disposition, and so I was trained, particularly by my mother, to pity the lot of the sick, the poor and the lowly. I even now distinctly remember one telling instance of an act of my dear mother as if it took place yesterday. A servant of ours was ill and bed-ridden. Out of false ideas of pride, the other two servants, even the old maid-servant, hesitated to remove and clean the dish from which the sick person had his gruel. After her prayers, and on her way to the dining-hall, my mother saw the uncleared vessel by the bedside and sensed the situation. It was about 12 in the noon. Without any doubt and before another could prevent her from doing it, she took the vessel to the tank, cleaned it, and, then, after a fresh bath, she took her first meals of the day at an hour later than usual. She rebuked no one; she never sermonised. But that act of hers had a potent effect on the morale of our household, and she won from all eyes that moist yet fearless gaze, from every breast that deep yet almost silent praise which a noble deed alone has power to compel. That was my mother. I daily adore her; that is one of the first acts that I do every morning soon after I get up. Thus, it has not been possible for me to harden my heart to the realities of the world. The beggar problem has already become a serious menace in Ernakulam. On Saturdays, one has to be told off to give rice or piec to the numberless beggars that come to my door. But they come on other days as well; and, worse still, there are the hardy, the militant and the irritant sort among them. For these I have no pity whatever. And yet I find it difficult to be really severe to any one of these when they tease me even in my office-room. Many know my weakness, I suppose. For, when my rickshaw is seen on the streets, those, who habitually sit there with marks of their hideous diseases exposed, get up and make some sort of a grunt or a groan to attract my attention. As a rule, I only

go about with a few pice in my pocket. Even on my long pilgrim tours, and I am happy to say that I have gone to almost every famous temple in India, from Rameswaram to Hrishikesh, I had to arm my servant with pice and to see that he either preceded or immediately followed me so as to be saved from the jostling of the diseased humanity that infested the outskirts of every famous shrine, of every fair city in India. I do not say all this to make my life-story look an ideal one. Far from it. My only object is to prepare the minds of those ill-starred persons who chance to read it to what I am about to relate. As a student, with my scholarship and Vishu gifts, I was permitted to pay my mite for floods and famines; and, nearer home, I never hesitated to be of service to those of my friends who were in need of funds to meet their fees. Thus, it came natural to me to assist the so-called depressed classes. My rule has ever been to do the best I can and the most I can and to say the least about it. Excepting my wife, I do not think any one knows how much I have spent to finance students, to help deserving institutions and to alleviate the condition of the untouchables. In my humble work to improve the position of these last, I cannot but record the help I got from my friend, the late Vidwan K. P. Karuppan. He was a Valan, a fisherman by caste—a fact about which he was not ashamed. He was a good Sanskrit scholar, and a poet of no mean order, and deservedly occupied the proud position of the leader of his people in which capacity he was nominated as a member of the Legislative Council. He was at first appointed as the Sanskrit Pandit of a Sircar High School for girls and retired as a Malayalam Lecturer of the Maharaja's College. He was an examiner in Malayalam of the Madras University and once the Chairman of the Board of Examiners for the Oriental Studies. I had the happy privilege of helping him on in his worldly career. * He was always grateful to my wife and myself

for the genuine interest we took in his works and career and for treating him as if he belonged to our household. We did our best to make his closing days cheerful and comfortable. Owing to his many-sided activities, I found him, at times, indifferent to the main task, then I would draw his attention to his error, and he would soon respond to the call of duty. On one occasion, when I was unusually severe in my strictures, he wrote to me a long letter, a free rendering of which I shall give below:—

"It is possible that I may forget myself if I were to forget that respectable person who is the chief cause of my present post. I write this reply to that honoured individual who is the cause of all my prosperity. Though the two matters entrusted to me are being a bit delayed, yet I shall perform them without fail.

We have between us an unweakening bond of love which is a combination of the devotion of a servant and the love of a master.

This tree of love had its root in literary activities, but subsequently developed into different branches of activities."

Years after, and a few months before he contracted the sickness which proved fatal, I had to take him to task for his inattention to certain important papers entrusted to him. As I knew he was passing through inauspicious years and heading to a bad period of his life, I had specially enjoyed on him to repeat every day the *Lalitasaahasranamam* which he knew very well; he failed me there too. This also gave me room for dissatisfaction. Hence this apologetic and feeling letter. A free rendering of the letter is as follows:—

"Doubt of disobedience should never occur. There is not even a remedy for it, no palliative measure . . . I feel a sad doubt that I am being misunderstood. Though I be, in body, however far separated, yet my heart, immersed in regard and devotion, is at your service.

If there is one disciple who has not been able to imitate (assimilate) in his life the noble, ideal life of a master, it is I.

Will there come a time when I would forget him who, at the meeting of the Bharata Vilasa Sabha, called me to his side, soon after I finished the Sakuntalam boat-song and, touching in a loving way my shirt-button, asked all about me—who from that day to this, has been helping me in all my literary efforts like a male incarnation of the goddess of our Malayalam language?

One thing I have to submit: today's dependent is not that young man. He too is aging. Time is flying from when body can follow the mind. . . . Remembering my weakness, kindly forgive everything. Except by indolence, never by intention, have I committed a mistake?

My environments are not clean. Therefore I do not daily repeat that holy hymn of *Lalitisahasranamam*. Pray for me, please.

Ever your servant (Sd) Karuppan.

The meeting referred to above was held on 1084 Medam 19. I owe it to my friend, the late Maliyammavu Kunhu Varad to say that the B. V. Sabha owed its existence to him. He was then the Manager of the Bharata Vilasam Press of Trichur. The next day, Mr. Ullur Parameswara Iyer and Mr. Kerala Varma Tampuran of Pambalam came to see me at Ernakulam. Thus it was that I came to know these three poets who afterwards became intimate friends of mine.

Mr. Karuppan being a Valan, the first community to which I had to lend my services was his own. In the first place, what we two did was to organise meetings and societies of Valans in several centres to develop in them a social consciousness and a desire to improve their condition. This procedure, we knew, would stimulate in them a spirit of self-respect and of

self-sacrifice. We also prevailed on the parents of intelligent boys and girls to send these to schools, and all to have absolute faith in an Almighty God. Expenses to convene meetings were, in innumerable instances, met by me; similarly, I had the good luck to help, in my humble way and within my means, several of these students to meet the cost of education. In the case of other communities, students who wished to have financial assistance from me had to come armed with letters from the Head Masters of their respective schools to assure me that they were *bona fide* students, needy and deserved help; but, so far as pupils from the depressed classes were concerned, a certificate from Pandit Karuppan was all that was asked for.

One of the early meetings of the Valans was held in the Eynakulam College Hall. The hall was crowded; even the verandah could not hold the rest of the audience, so that, after the main meeting, we had to address an overflow meeting in the College grounds. Though the printed notice had put me down as the Chairman of that meeting, I proposed Mr. E. K. Ayyakutti to the chair. Mr. A. B. Salem, Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon also addressed the audience, besides of course Karuppan and myself. A committee was appointed to take the necessary steps to memorialise the government not to auction the fishing-stakes of the States.

The hereditary occupations of the Valans were fishing and boatservice, in both of which they excelled. They had the exclusive right of rowing H. H. the Maharaja's boat. For this and from other legitimate considerations, they were given the monopoly of fishing in the backwaters of the State. But with the advent of the motor-boats and of the Fishery Department, they began to be gradually deprived of these, their sole sources of living. It was about this critical time that Karuppan and myself had to fight for their

privileges. As Mr. A. B. Salem, in his capacity of the Special Fishery Officer, came to know of the history of these people, pitied their lot, and joined us to assist them. It was thus that we three joined to convene a mammoth gathering of Valans at Vatuthalam, and, so to say, conspired to induce the Diwan Mr. Banerji to attend it. He was thus very much impressed with the gravity and the sincerity of their grievances, and tried to stem the adverse tide which was about to engulf them. His sympathetic remarks stood in good stead even during the time of his successors. Numberless associations sprang up in various places. But the two most important ones, so far as I remember, were *Valasamudaya Parishkarini Sabha*, with headquarters at Ernakulam, and the *Kalyanideyan Sabha* at Anappuzha near Cranganore. This one owns a temple, a library and an school. In an address of welcome which it presented to Diwan Sir T. Vijayaraghava Chari, these words occur—

“ഞങ്ങൾക്കു നമ്മുടെ സമൂഹത്തിൽ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്ന പല പ്രശ്നവും കൂട്ടിച്ചേർത്തു; ഹൈന്ദവത്വത്തിനും മതവിചാരങ്ങൾക്കും അപരിഹാര്യമായിത്തീർന്നുവെക്കുകയും ചെയ്തതും അതും അതും മറ്റും കൂടി കൂട്ടിച്ചേർത്തു നമ്മുടെ സമൂഹത്തിൽ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്ന പല പ്രശ്നങ്ങളും അതിനുള്ള അറിയിച്ചു നമ്മുടെ സമൂഹത്തിൽ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്ന പല പ്രശ്നങ്ങളും അതിനുള്ള അറിയിച്ചു നമ്മുടെ സമൂഹത്തിൽ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്ന പല പ്രശ്നങ്ങളും അതിനുള്ള അറിയിച്ചു.” (We do not forget that Thottakkad Kunhikrishna Menon has in every way worked to remove, without prejudice to others, the several difficulties (disabilities) that confronted our community and to bring us to the fold of the cultured society.)

In his reply he touched, among others, on two points which are pertinent to my purpose. I quote from a newspaper report:

“All that they needed was an school-building answering the requirement of the educational Code, and this, he said, the government would provide for them. As for the representation asked for in the Education Committee, he had already passed orders

society for the Valans, I request you to introduce me to the most influential among them. I shall put myself in communication with him and work out a practical scheme as early as possible.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) R. A. Gayatrinatha Iyer."

The Valans are a simple, guileless race, and very grateful besides. When once my wife fell ill, one society at Azhikal wrote to me thus:—

"ആവശ്യം എന്നതുവരെ, സമാധാനം നിത്യവും സഭാമേളയിൽ കൂടി ഉൾപ്പെടുത്തുന്ന സഭാജനങ്ങൾ, നിശ്ചയമായും, കൊച്ചിയിൽ ഭൂമി കൈവശപ്പെടുത്തി, സഭാദായകത്തിന് വഴിവെക്കും മാത്രം കഴിഞ്ഞുവെന്നു നിശ്ചയിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു."

(Till she recovers from her sickness, it is resolved that the members of the Sabha should daily meet in the premises of the Sabha, and that the Sabha should make offerings to the Bhagavati in the Cranganore temple.)

How kind of them!

One Valan, Kochunni by name, was adventurous enough to take service in trading steamers. I encouraged him and, to start with, assisted him with coats and trousers. I still preserve a letter he wrote to me from New York. He belonged to Ernakulam; and he never failed to see me and to spend hours with me talking of his varied and interesting experiences on the sea and in the different countries his vessel touched. He called himself, when out, Francis Joseph; but he remained a devout Hindu all his life.

"I trust by this time you have succeeded in communicating with my parents. I am well and getting on nicely. This country is alright; but race prejudice is rampant.

"The richest man in this country is John D. Rockefeller, the oil king. The Gackwar of Baroda, his wife and son visited him last month. The son is a student of the Harvard University.

"The Maharaja of Mayurbhanj who was visiting

the sporting places here, especially Convey Island, left this last week for Liverpool by the steamer Lusitania.

"Life is very expensive here; not at all like India. A suit of cloths cost from £5 to £6. I am here now 7 months; as soon as I realise enough money, I will be going to England.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) Francis Joseph,
Pier 19,

North River, New York City. U. S. A."

The Valans have not left me. And it is not my intention to stop social service till the close of my life. When, for the benefit of the Valans, the Shanmukhapuram Colony at Vatuthala was started, the representatives of the colonists came to me with an appeal that I should be their patron and guide. I readily consented to assist them in building up their colony in a proper way. For this end, we formed an Advisory Council which, to start with, consisted of the Municipal Chairman, the Manager of the Tatapuram Oil Mills, two Advocates and myself. A small shrine for Sri Subramanya Swami, and a Library and Reading Room, two associations, one for males and another for females, these were brought into existence. When they settled down, there were three societies among them and bickerings to boot.

1938-9-10. Went to Shanmukhapuram to amicably settle the differences among the members of the three societies there. My suggestion to have all the three combined into one to be called the Shanmukhavilas Sabha was unanimously accepted after I explained to them the evils that would always otherwise be present among them.

* * *

The other community that claimed my attention was the Izhuvas. Wherever these called me, I went; and they called me to different parts of the southern taluks where their number has all along been great.

But the one society with which I was connected for several years was the Cherayi Vinjana-Vardhani Sabha. Mr. Kannanganatt Chennan was one of its prominent promoters. He was a rich and influential man of the locality. Somehow, he took a fancy for me; and, thereafter, he would not do anything without consulting me.

The Sabha was originally started in 1063. But I came linked to it in the Chingom of 1084 when I was asked to revise its constitution. The rules as framed by me were passed on 29-1-1084 at a meeting in which the audience numbered not less than 3,000. In the light of practical experience, the rules were again slightly changed here and there, in 1088. This set of rules served as a model for several other Jzhuva societies. As this community was an advanced one, I had to contend with frequent discordant elements. I alone know how much time I had to spend to patch up differences and to bring peace among opposing parties, not only in this society, but also in other societies of these people. A *Kuzi* was started under my guidance by the aforesaid society to help the individual members to liquidate their debts, and the society to raise a decent fund to enlarge their religious and educational activities. Before the termination of this *chitti*, another and a more burdensome one was started without my consent. Also, by that time, two or three of the young members of the community, fresh from college, began to be dissatisfied with my cautions, according to them conservative guidance. These began to sow discord among the managers of the Sabha.

In the interests of the Sabha, I thought it best to withdraw from the scene, which I did, in spite of the appeals from some of the old men who had worked with me.

About this the then Secretary of the Sabha formally wrote to me, on 31-1-1099, a letter which, in English, will read as follows,—

"Records show that, till 1094, the Sabha had the benefit of your advice and co-operation from you, a well-wisher of the public, and on that account, the Sabha progressed in the proper way, and that, as a memento of your services a gold medal was presented to you.

But, after that, there is nothing to indicate that you even visited the Sabha. We think it is due to the want of consideration of the subsequent Committee.

We grieve to find from experience that this has worked for the downfall of the Sabha.

Therefore, if the members of the previous committee have, from misunderstanding, done anything amiss, we, on behalf of the community beg of you for your pardon, and pray for your help, co-operation and advice, as before, and appeal for a favourable reply."

Again, on 10-4-1102, there was a second appeal to me:—

"Some of us do fully realise that the existence and development of the V. V. Sabha is the actual result of your lively, persistent efforts, due to your generous sympathy with the pitiable condition of the Izhivas in general. We do still recollect that you have had occasion even to shed tears in the soil of the V. V. Sabha for its sake. You had also once to expose your life to danger on your way back from the Sabha during one winter season.

"The Sabha had been steadily developing in every way under your timely and valuable direction. It began to occupy a prominent position both in the political and social world. Your connection also brought it in close touch with the Government, nay, even with H. H. the Maharaja. For these, we the Izhivas shall be indebted to you for ever."

The reference to H. H. the Maharaja was appealing to me. For, apart from the public address, the only other one which H. H. the abdicated Ruler

received on the occasion of the completion of H. H.'s 60th birthday was from this Sabha. On 12-9-1912, H. H. wrote to me to communicate to the members of the V. V. Sabha the pleasure H. H. felt over its loyal endeavours to commemorate his 60th birthday. "I should very much like to receive the address proposed by the Sabha in person, but am not in a position now to say whether I shall be able to do so," owing to the many functions which he would have to go through on that day. "I shall let you know, in due course, if I shall be able to meet their request." On 17-12-1912, H. H. again wrote to me on the subject: "I do not think I shall have time to receive the address directly from the members of the Sabha. I shall, however, be glad to receive it from you. I shall also be glad to receive the book *Visha Vriksha*, composed by your wife." This was dedicated to His Highness. But it was possible for me, with the gracious leave of His Highness, to have the office-bearers of the Committee of the Sabha present at the ceremony. About the book, H. H. kindly wrote to me, on 29-1-1913, in these appreciative terms: "I have carefully read portions of the translation of the *Poison Tree* by your wife. It is a good piece of Malayalam literature, and the composition is far superior to that of many of the modern works."

The allusion to the gold medal was unfortunate; for it was forced on me during the visit of Diwan Vijayaraghavachari to the Sabha when he was presented with an address by that premier institution of the Ikhvas. All at once it was sprung upon me, and, when I said I would not accept it, I was prevailed upon by Messrs. M. I. Virkki, M. A. Chacko and the Diwan himself not to refuse it, as my act would acutely and painfully hurt the feelings of a large community.

The address contained a kind reference to me, and the presentation of the medal was then reported in the papers in appreciative terms.

"It was only from 1084 that the Sabha really began, with its present constitution, its regular and beneficial existence, with the blessing of Sri Narayana Guru Swami and under the advice and guidance of Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon, a sincere well-wisher of back ward communities." So much from the address; now let us look at the report of the meeting published in the *Cochin Argus* in its issue of the 7th of February of 1920.

"As soon as the reading of the report of the Sabha by its Secretary was over, the Diwan presented Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon, on behalf of the Sabha, with a gold medal in appreciation of his services. Our readers need no introduction to this pioneer social worker who has always extended to the backward and depressed classes of Cochin his help in more directions than one. Mr. Menon's enthusiasm in the uplift of the Tiyas, Valans and Pulayas is well known all over the State and elsewhere, and would have been more widely known but for his unostentatious method of work."

The Sabha, by a resolution, settled to yearly perform a *poorja* in its temple, which I did much to enlarge and to improve, on the anniversary of my birthday. That act of theirs touched my heart. But practical wisdom, however, warned me not to be moved by their appeals to remain as the guide of their Sabha. Although I stepped out of the Sabha, I never stopped helping them or those who sought my advice or assistance. This statement will be borne out by the records of the Rickshawallah Association, the Kudumi Samajam, the Kaivalyapradarini Sabha, Sri Dharmapari-palana Yogam, and several other societies of various communities in the State.

I was also glad to know that my activities for these people had the approval of their leader Sri Narayana Guru Swami. He was a great man, and because he gave a spiritual aspect to his social reform, it had wonderful effect. On 25-2-1917, he sent word to me

from Alwaye to know what time would suit me for a talk with him. I told his messenger that I would go over on an early day. Through pressure of work, I could not go to him for some days. Then he sent Mr. Kallarakkal Raman Karthavu to remind me of my promise. So I went to him on 22-4-1917. A disciple of his was waiting for me at the station. He took me to Swami's *asramam*. When I was announced, he came out of his prayer-room. He praised me for my 'disinterested and self-sacrificing' work for the uplift of the depressed classes. Then I told him that, instead of praising me for it, he should bless me so that I might get more strength to do my task. He knew that my words were not conventional but sincere. He shut his eyes, closed his hands, and turning to his prayer-room, said, "I shall pray for it; shall daily pray for it." I bowed my head to him. Of course our talk was in Malayalam.

"I propose to appoint a Committee to conduct my *Asramam* and the Sanskrit school here. Sadasiva Iyer and Candeth have kindly promised to serve on the Committee. I want you too to be on it. Primarily, it is to talk about this that I wished to see you." To this I replied that my services were at his disposal. Incidentally, he remarked that all pupils, before they joined the institution, should execute an agreement that they would not be bound by caste scruples. He fully agreed with me when I pointed out to him that it might be done only after they had attained their majority. He thanked me for going over, and said, on parting, that I had his full support in my uplift movement. I do not know why the Committee did not materialise.

In rendering aid, I only look to the need, never to the caste or creed of the person or of the community. The foundation-stone of the Muslim mosque on the Broadway in Ernakulam was laid by me. I considered it a high honour to be invited by

Dr. A. K. Kunhalu to perform that function. To the Muslim School here, to the libraries that community have started here and in Cochin, I have been of some help. The first Muslim Conference in this State was held at Cranganore on 31-8-1930. I had the honour of being invited to preside over it.

On 10-10-1916, I presented a good clock to the Subbaraya Pai Memorial School conducted by Rao Sahib Mr. Guna Pai mainly for the benefit of the children of his community, when I found it was working without one.

When, on 1-12-1930, Mr. Raman, the well-known artist from Cherayi, opened his studio at Ernakulam, he kindly referred to the service I rendered him to assist his studies at Calcutta.

"It can be said that the construction of the building started here with the never-to-be-forgotten help of Krishna Menon and others is in a way completed." This sentence is from a letter to me of 25-11-1939 from that great devotee "Vazhakkunnam". The structure mentioned is his *Illam*.

In getting a Y. M. C. A. started at Ernakulam, I have exerted not a little. When Mr. Dixon M. A., and Rev. Popley, who were in charge of the Y.M.C.A. activities on the West Coast, came to me for their annual collection, I made it a point to complain to them over the absence of a branch of it in the capital of the State. Then, when I chanced to meet Mr. Fowler once, I pressed him with my request. That bore fruit.

The Grange, Cooner.

May. 9, 1916.

My dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

This is just to say that I greatly enjoyed the conversation I had with you on the train. It is always a pleasure to meet men so broadminded and with such a social passion.

I have written to our Secretary in Cochin, Mr.

Thomas P. Chandy, and expect he will visit Ernakulam soon in connection with starting a Y. M. C. A. I have given him your name and know you will assist him in every way you can.

I am sending you a small book which I think you will enjoy.

With warm regards,

Yours Sincerely

(Sd) J. H. Fowler.

* * *

I shall next pass on to the *Palayas*. On 21-4-1913, more than a hundred Palayas came by boat to my reclamation-ground to the west of Kumarakulam with a petition to me to help them start an all-Cochin Palaya Association. At my request, some of them went at once and fetched Mr. Karuppan. We prepared the notice for the meeting. After getting the consent of Rev. Fr. Dominic to hold the meeting in the St. Albert's High School Hall, I got the notice printed. Its wide circulation was undertaken by the Palayas themselves, whom I specially advised—those who went about the work—to tell their people to attend the meeting after a good wash and with a neat dress. This injunction, I was glad to note, every one had scrupulously followed when we met on 25-5-1913. The hall was found too small to accommodate the gathering. So the meeting was adjourned to the open grounds on the southern side. The steps of the stone-staircase served us as our platform. Rev. Fr. Dominic, Mr. Karuppan and myself spoke to them about them, about the need for an association, and exhorted them to give up their bad habits and to work hard, jointly and severally, for their development. We induced two or three from among them also to address their fellow-men and fellow-women. Ladies, of whom there were a good number, evidenced as much enthusiasm as the males. It was a lively, unique gathering. It was the first of its kind. I felt happy over it. In September

of the same year, we again met when a set of rules were passed for the working of the Association and a Committee was constituted for the same purpose. The collection made was left with Fr. Dominic for safe keeping. He subsequently gave it to Mr. Karuppan and took a registered hypothecation-bond for it. I did not leave them there. I made them hold meetings in several centres where they lived, so as to create in them a desire for solidarity and better living. Our propoganda created an awakening among the people. At the same time, I directed my attention to some of the disabilities under which they were labouring. They complained, with some amount of truth, that, in certain places, they had no easy access to schools and hospitals, and that even roads could be used only with care and caution. In one of my letters to H. H. the abdicated Ruler, I introduced the subject. In that letter I also referred to the meeting of the Pulayas and to the joy it gave them when, after the yacht-race, they were asked by H. H. to join in the tug-of-war. This is the reply that I got to my letter.

Springfield, Connor.
31st May 1913.

My dear Kunjukrishnan,

I am now busily engaged with the report of the Malayalam Improvement Committee, and hope to be able to communicate my views on it to the Diwan soon. The report contains several excellent proposals, but I fear that it will be difficult for my Darbar to find the money at present to carry them all out.

I have perused with much interest the accounts of the meeting of the Pulayas. From the number of the persons attending the meeting I am glad to see that this backward class of my subjects has also begun to realise their poor condition and is anxious to

improve it. I quite remember the incident that took place at Bolghatty on the Regatta day referred to in the letter. I shall give the memorial my best consideration when I get it.

* * *

I remain,
Yours Sincerely
(Sd) Rama Varmah.

When, soon after, I paid my respects to H. H., I chanced to glance at the subject. Then H. H. asked me whether or not any legal prohibition existed against the Pulayas in particular using the public roads and institutions that were open to all. I submitted that custom stood in their way; they felt the disability as it barred their progress. After some discussion, H. H. was pleased to graciously permit them to submit the memorial to the Government on the subject, which I lost no time in making them do. I drafted the memorial myself, so that it might not irritate the sentiments of any other community and also because I was anxious that the prayers should contain only modest and practical proposals.

On 9-7-1913, I got this letter from the Diwan Peishear, Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyer:

"With reference to the memorial presented by you to the Diwan on behalf of the poor Pulaya community of the State, praying for free primary education and also for permission for the free use of all the public thoroughfares, I would like to discuss the subject with you in all its aspects.

I shall be glad if you can kindly look me up for a few hours on the morning of Sunday next."

We had a full and free talk on the whole subject of the Pulaya disabilities, the possible ways of removing them and of helping the community in getting free primary education. Our talk did bear fruit in ample measure, although it took some time for the Government order to be published. This order with

its Malayalam rendering was printed and published by the Pulaya Samajam, and it was broadly circulated among all adult Pulayas in the State. Their joy was unbounded. The Secretary, Chathan Krishnethi, began a sort of a petition to me with this sentence:—

“മമ്പുരാൻ മിനക്കണ്ണുകൾക്ക് താണു കാണിക്കാത്ത അനേകം പരമേശ്വരൻ വഴിയിലും കരോളത്തിലും നടപ്പാൻ കഴവില്ലാതെ ഉത്തരവുണ്ടാക്കിക്കൊടുത്താൽ, അഗതികളായ അനേകം പരമേശ്വരൻ അവകാശപ്പെടുന്നതായ അനേകർക്കു സുതീയകൊള്ളുന്നു.” (When it is remembered that you were instrumental in getting an order issued to permit us to walk freely on public roads and in the market, we praise you as an incarnation to protect us.)

No one expected to get such a generous concession, as they got it from a government which was considered conservative in its religious outlook. Both Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon and Mr. P. Gopala Menon said, when they met me after the promulgation of the order, “Aniyan, you have scored a really great victory”.

1914-September-5. Pulaya meeting with tickets for admission! Had I known of this step, I would have contravened it, or, at any rate, would not have attended it. The members of the Executive Committee prayed to be excused for the blunder, and explained the procedure by saying that each ticket was priced only 3 pies, and that it was done with the permission of many to increase their fund. The attendance was very large. Several thanked me for getting an order from the Durbar enabling them to join school, and to walk on public roads. I told them that it would require tact and patience on their part to put the right into practice.

1914—September—14. Miss Robbins and Mrs. Bower came to solicit co-operation in starting a Pulaya school. When I told them that I was but an unknown lawyer, Miss Robbins said that I wielded great influence over the backward classes in the State. If I did,

I replied, it was because I was honest and disinterested in my efforts to uplift them, and, quietly added, the question of conversion never came in. That stroke went home. I have no objection to a conversion by conviction or by faith, I said; but, for earthly trinkets, well, that was to me unthinkable. They agreed with my view. I said I would gladly do what I could.

I have ever been explicit in my remark and firm in the position I took up in connection with the change of faith. I am happy to say that my attitude never cost me the loss of respect of any acquaintance of mine belonging to the Christian or Mohammedan communities. On the other hand, I have the good fortune to own several Christian and Muslim friends. His Grace the Archbishop of Ernakulam, Dr. Augustine Kandathil, His Grace the late Archbishop of Varapuzha Dr. Angel Mary, His Grace Dr. Joseph Attippetty, the present Archbishop, His Grace the late Dr. Vazappilli, Bishop of Trichur, and His Grace Archbishop Dr. Abilio Vas das Neves the late Bishop of Cochim, now Archbishop of Miranda, in Portugal, have blessed me with their friendship. Not one will say that I have not given my assistance to the institutions conducted by these two communities. Here is what I wrote to Mr. P. C. Varkey, the Editor of the *Sathyamadam*, about His Grace Dr. Angel Mary on hearing about his death:—11-11-1944. I feel sad over the death of His Grace Dr. Angel Mary, the late Archbishop of Varapuzha. You know we were friends, and, off and on, met in Kumarakulam or in the episcopal Palace. I mourn his loss. He was an eminent divine and was greatly devoted to God. He ever subordinated self to the larger self of humanity. So far as I know, he never for once intoxicated himself with the power of his place nor used it to further any worldly sectarian purpose. He retained his hold on his fold by his calm life, simple habits, and noble deeds. Courtesy was the dominant note of his character. He

always tried to convert Christians to the religion of Christ and induce them to strictly follow His great example. He was one of those who strove to get an Indian succeed him. For that, Malabar should be particularly grateful to him. May his soul rest in everlasting peace."

About four months after my talk with Miss Robbins and Mrs. Bower, I had a letter, dated 11-1-1915, from Rev. J. J. B. Palmer of Kottayam on the subject of the education of the Pulayas:

"I was very disappointed to find on Saturday evening on calling at your house that you had left for Trichur. I was looking forward to an interesting conversation with you about the movement among the Pulayas around Ernakulam and their desire for education. I understand from Mr. Bower that you are much interested in this movement and that you are regarded by them in some sense as a benefactor and leader.

We are quite ready to give whatever assistance is possible towards providing elementary education for them. And, as a first step, I should like to know the scope there is for elementary schools for them in the Cochin State, (1) south of Idappalli (2) from Chalakudy northward.

If you can find time to send me a few lines about these matters, I shall be greatly obliged."

I wrote to him in detail on the subject, not omitting to give prominence to my aversion to the tendency to the introduction of proselytism, even in elementary schools. "The main effect of conversion, on a native's religious belief is", remarked Prof. Gilbert Murray, "to teach him to disbelieve and despise a hundred little present and living sanctities of daily life—sacred sites, sacred places, sacred prohibitions—which gave an ordered pattern to his conduct, and in return to tell him of other sanctities, higher, of course, but far away and long ago, and often a little difficult to his

comprehension. In cases of this sort, the adaptation is too difficult. No communities and few individuals succeed in it. They lose the mores that held together their old life, though they keep all sorts of old habits and beliefs which are inconsistent with the new one."

I did not hear again from those quarters. However, to a note I got from the Diwan, early in January 1915, about the primary education of the Pulayias, I sent a reply on the 24th of January. When I met him again, he spoke about my letter in high terms, and said that my sketch of the Pulaya movement he read with interest and that the scheme for their education would bear fruit. I thanked him. Asked why I did not include in my scheme night schools for adult education, I told him that, as I had burnt my fingers already by a night school, I thought it was not worth while to attempt to start such institutions.

In 1909 (21-3-1904), I started a night school in a class-room of the Perumanoor Church school. Mr. Palliyil Rama Menon, Vidwan Karuppan and myself taught the students of whom there were about thirty to start with. They were all grown-up males. I met all the cost. The tuition was free. Besides teaching them Malayalam and arithmetic, we also gave them talks on subjects connected with sanitation and hygiene and also on the history and geography of Cochin. Once Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon came and addressed them on diverse matters and distributed sweets to them. All on a sudden, I got a letter from the Rev. Vicar to request me to remove the school from there, as His Grace the Archbishop did not like the idea of holding night classes there. In this unforeseen difficulty, I approached Mr. C. Mathai who was then, I believe, the Chief Inspector of Schools. Here is his reply:—

Trichur,

14-1-10

My dear Sir,

I am in due receipt of your letter of the 26th Dhanu. We were having our conference until yesterday,

and so I would not speak to Mr. Pope about the proposal you make regarding your night school. I hope to do so however to-day or tomorrow when I meet him, and trust we shall be able to come to some satisfactory arrangement. I may assure you of my deep interest in the good work that you have undertaken.

With kind regards,

I am,

Yours sincerely

(Sd.) C. Mathai.

On the 15th, he again kindly wrote to me that the special Educational Officer had agreed to give me the use of the Proverthy School building, provided Mr. Davies had no objection. By Proverthy School he meant the Primary Department of the College, which was located in a thatched building. I shifted the night school to that place, as Mr. Davies placed it at my disposal. Then I found the attendance decreasing. I could not explain the cause of it. But, when I found, in spite of my strict injunction not to do so, certain pupils repeatedly smoking *beedi*, I was forced to close the school. Suppose, by some accident, the building caught fire, I would have to pay its cost to the Sircar. The necessity of Night Schools in the education of the adult poor labourer I have realised, and never denied the delight of contributing to such institutions.

Trichur, 16th Edavom 1095.

From The President, Gokhale Memorial Free
Night School, Trichur.
To

M. R. Ry T. K. Krishna Menon Ayl.,
Ernakulam.

Sir,

* * * *

It is to your help in the initial stages of our work
that the success of the undertaking is entirely due and

we look to you for further encouragement and support.

I have the honour to be

(Sd) P. Sankaran Nambiyar.

During the time of Sir T. Vijayaraghava Chari, a Pulaya Colony was started at Chalakudy; it was on a small scale and was intended as an experimental measure. He was an officer of very generous impulses and was very sympathetic in his attitude towards the depressed classes of the people in the State. Through the intercession of Mr. V. K. Rama Menon, the eldest son of the then Ruler, the management of this Colony was taken up by a small Committee composed of himself, his sister Srimathi Ratna Amma, Mr. Pattathil Padmanabha Menon and myself. We appointed a Superintendent who was to reside in the colony itself and manage all its affairs under our control and advice. We developed it into a model colony. We had, in our work, the advice and help of H. B's. Gerson, Esq. Parukutti Nettyaramma. Off season, when the Pulayas had no work in the paddy fields, other vocations were provided for them for their livelihood. A large tank was dug for their bath, and there were wells for drinking-water. Each house had its own bit of compound which the holder was to convert into a garden. There was a literary school, and an industrial school attached to the colony. Also, we got a nice shrine put up in which, with the generous help of Srimathi Parukutti Nettyaramma, we installed the image of Naturaja. The roads within the colony had avenue trees. To inspect and to guide the work of the colony, the members of the Committee used to make frequent visits to the place. We insisted on the Pulaya colonists taking daily baths and on going to the temple for worship and prayers, keeping their premises clean, and on sending their children to the schools. The work of the colony progressed so well that it attracted the attention of the Government and provoked questions in the Legislative Council.

But when Mr. Maman Chohan, the Protector of the Depressed Classes, began to interfere with our management, we gave it up. One incident more has here to be noted about it before I leave it altogether. When Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer became the Diwan, one day, while I was travelling in the train, I found, in front of the colony, a large wooden board on two posts with the inscription "Narayanapuram Colony" on it. I did not like it. I wrote to Mr. V. K. Rama Menon at once. We found out who had it set up there, and we also could easily gather the motive of that act. However, we got it removed immediately, and set up a new one on its stead to announce that its name was the "Vijayaraghavapuram Colony" which it still fittingly bears.

I have to go back a little. When Sir Vijayaraghava Chari was the Diwan, there was, early in May 1920, a Pulaya Conference presided by Sir Chandravarkar of Bombay. It was got up by Brother Patros, an Indian missionary, a native of the State. I got no invitation for it, although the promoter very well knew that I took a keen interest in the welfare of the poor Pulaya community. For, when he was a teacher in the L. S. School at Narakkal, he wrote to me, on 15-2-90, (this year will correspond to 1915) to inform him as to how he could get for the Pulaya boys of that locality "*English Education* free of cost or at half rate." I shall quote a few sentences from his letter. "I write to you because I have been informed that you take a keen interest in the uplift of the low castes. I hear that the next Pulaya Association is to meet at Narakkal. We look up to that time with great enthusiasm."

Next, I shall quote a few extracts from my diary to show the interest the Diwan took in the Pulaya uplift and how he dexterously managed to outwit Br. Patros in his attempt to slightly mislead Sri Chandravarkar.

20-3-1920. Diwan presided over the Pulaya Conference. The Pulayas gathered in unprecedented numbers. The Diwan told me that I must remain with him till the end of the meeting. Evidently, he knew that I should have to go away to attend the meeting of the Education Code Revision Committee. I got a note from Mr. Mathai that I am wanted there as the section relating to Vernacular and Anglo-Vernacular schools is to be taken up. On that the Diwan wrote, "Please wait as I want Krishna Menon here." So, there the discussion was delayed till I went up, and the Committee broke up only at 9 at night. I had to translate the speech of the Diwan into Malayalam. He spoke slowly and with feeling.

23-4-1920. 4-23. Reached Coonoor. Argued the petition before the Diwan. After that, the Diwan told me that Mr. Chandravarkar was coming to Cochin to preside over a Pulaya Conference to be held at Trippoonithuruth. From his letter and from that of Mr. Damodara Menon, the Ag. Diwan Peishcar, he said that he suspected that the promoters of the Conference wanted to make out that the Hindus kept out of the movement. So he wanted me to meet Mr. Chandravarkar, and explain the real state of affairs in Cochin. He gave me a note of introduction as well.

1-5-1920. Mr. P. Damodara Menon tells me that Sir Chandravarkar desired to see me. It seems D. M. told him all about the Pulaya movement and mentioned my name in that connection.

2-5-1920. Went to see Sir Chandravarkar with the Diwan's note, which I sent in with my card. He came out and said "I am so happy to meet you, Mr. Krishna Menon." "Have you got an invitation for the Pulaya Conference?" he asked me. "No, Sir." I said. Then, he remarked, "I shall never forgive that Mr. Patras. My idea was that a Committee was inviting me, and that many from other communities would be present at the meeting." I sketched to him

a brief outline of the uplift movement, and explained to him the Hindu view point of that and that of Mr. Patros.

Sir Ch. "Will you accept my invitation?"

I. "I shall be proud and happy to do so."

Sir Ch. "Then, please come for the meeting."

I. "I shall try."

Sir Ch. "No trial, you must come. We shall go together."

Thus, he, the Diwan Peishkar and myself went to the place of meeting together. He told Mr. Patros to provide two seats for us near him. He had his speech printed before he came to Ernakulam; but, as a result of his talk with both of us, lots of new matter were introduced into several parts of his speech. He prefaced his speech with complimentary remarks about His Highness and the Diwan and wound it up with a graceful reference to me. And Mr. Patros had to translate all these into Malayalam for the benefit of that part of the audience that knew not English.

Before I close this chapter, I have yet to refer to another incident. When the Pulaya movement began to shape itself in trim form, certain educated men, fortunately their number was few, who, in after years, were to develop themselves into proclaimed social reformers, began to give out that I was advising the Pulayas not to give way on the roads even to respectable ladies, that I did these things for advertisement and for increasing my professional income! Mr. Karuppan chanced to hear of these malicious lies, and, through him, the leaders among the Izhuvas, the Valans and the Pulayas. They were terribly put out by these deliberate falsehoods and wanted to retaliate against their perpetrators. I told them that silence was the best weapon to be used against their enemies, and I appealed to them never to do anything that was hasty and ill-considered, for that would certainly spell ruin to our good cause and bring a really

had name to me. They pitied my lot; and, in consultation with my dear friend, Mr. Doraswamy Iyer, decided, as a counter-move, I thought, to present me with complimentary addresses, soon after the anniversary of my birthday in 1880. Mr. Doraswamy Iyer presided over the meeting held for this purpose in the Perumanoor St. George's Church compound on 13-12-1913. It was a large gathering, and consisted of representatives of several communities. I crave leave to quote a few lines from two or three of the addresses, for they all served as a healing balm to the sores the lies caused in my heart. The Pulayans gave pointed reference to one of these lies.

നവമുഖം കവചം നീക്കി വെളിച്ചം വരും
കരളം ചിത്രം, രക്തം പൂർണ്ണമായിട്ടും.
പുനഃപുനഃ വരും കവചം വെളിച്ചം കാത്തു
നിൽക്കും കിരണങ്ങൾ വിരളിച്ചുവരും.

* * * * *

നവമുഖം ചിത്രം നീക്കി വെളിച്ചം വരും
കരളം ചിത്രം, രക്തം പൂർണ്ണമായിട്ടും.
പുനഃപുനഃ വരും കവചം വെളിച്ചം കാത്തു
നിൽക്കും കിരണങ്ങൾ വിരളിച്ചുവരും.
പുനഃപുനഃ വരും കവചം വെളിച്ചം കാത്തു
നിൽക്കും കിരണങ്ങൾ വിരളിച്ചുവരും.
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നിൽക്കും കിരണങ്ങൾ വിരളിച്ചുവരും.
പുനഃപുനഃ വരും കവചം വെളിച്ചം കാത്തു
നിൽക്കും കിരണങ്ങൾ വിരളിച്ചുവരും.
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നിൽക്കും കിരണങ്ങൾ വിരളിച്ചുവരും.
പുനഃപുനഃ വരും കവചം വെളിച്ചം കാത്തു
നിൽക്കും കിരണങ്ങൾ വിരളിച്ചുവരും.

(This is part of a poem, in which the address was couched. It is composed in a Dravidian metre. It is not possible for me to give a correct rendering of it. But I shall try to give a free translation of it in prose. The other addresses, one from the Valans and the other from the Christians, also generally referred, to the

sest, and, placing her hands on my head, said, "My son, may God bless you and help you." I actually sank at her feet which I clasped with both my hands. Then, I realised I had not lived in vain.

—o—o—o—

IX. MY DAYS FOR SOCIAL SERVICE. ii.

When I worked for the uplift of the so-called depressed classes, I never neglected to exert for the welfare of my own community. A few years after I settled down at Ernakulam to practise at the Bar, an attempt was made by the Government of H. H. the abdicated Ruler to enact a Regulation to define the law relating to wills in the Cochin State. One of the avowed objects of that legislation was to completely deny testamentary capacity to the members of the Nayar community. The published draft took it for granted that, apart from the proposed regulation, the subjects of the State had no testamentary capacity, an assumption which could hardly be justified by reference to usage and authority. There was no decision of any Cochin Court negating that right. There were not a few instances of testamentary dispositions by persons following Marumakkathayam law, notably of a late First Prince of the Cochin Ruling Family that was accepted and acted up by the then Ruler and H. H.'s Government. The Registry Offices of the State disclosed examples to controvert the position taken up by the bill. Messrs. K. P. Padmanabha Menon, K. Rama Menon, A. Sankara Menon and myself discussed the whole question and prepared a long memorandum which we called "Some observations on the draft *Will Regulation*." That stated that no need for the legislation was pointed out by the Govt., no courts asked for it, nor the people. The proposed limitations, it remarked, were repugnant to the accepted principles of civilized jurisprudence and proper law, and were not only unjust and not

justified by any exigencies of the Nayar society. Our statements were fortified by the citation of authorities which the Government could not lightly pass over. I fear the Government did not expect this onslaught on its pet bill. We did not rest after the submission of the memorandum. We tried to educate the public, who would be affected by that unwanted and mischievous piece of legislation, about its dangerous consequences. The bill was dropped, and we were left to enjoy our rights.

This, however, served as an eye-opener to us. We thought the time was ripe enough to pray to H.H. the Maharaja for the enactment of a Nayar Regulation. I find in my diary of the 7th Dec. of 1915 a record to the effect that Mr. A. Sankara Menon and myself have, as a result of a talk among a few of us, started the drafting of a *Nayar Regulation*. Then, a deputation which consisted of Messrs. V. K. Kochunni Menon, Karimpatta Achuta Menon, T. M. Krishna Menon, Parakkal Krishna Menon and myself submitted that to His Highness along with a memorial. The memorial was signed by many of the leading Nayars of the State. The memorial stated, "The complexities of modern social life and the new ideals they have inevitably created in the minds of the younger generation have come into collusion with the traditional notions of the less advanced sections of the community, and the result has been a threatened disruption of families or at least the creation of a feeling of dissatisfaction and unrest." To obviate the evil, it said, the memorialists have embodied their humble suggestions in the form of a draft bill. The Nayar Regulation is the outcome of this memorial which the great Ruler was graciously pleased to receive with generous sympathy.

I had been requesting Messrs. V. K. Kochunni Menon, V. K. Sankara Menon, C. Achutha Menon, Karimpatta Achuta Menon and T. M. Krishna Menon

start an organization and an organ to safeguard the rights of the Nayers, to advance their interests, and to ward off and answer wanton insults on them. Every one, of these would say it was necessary, but no one was enthusiastic enough to respond to my prayer. From Mr. C Achuta Menon, I got two letters on the subject.

Trichur,
25-10-1088.

My dear Aniyar,

For the last three months I have been trying to interest people here in a Nayar organisation, but hitherto without success. At first many rendered lip-service, but now there is not even that. Even last Sunday I tried to get a few people together, but no one turned up. . . . I cannot ask any one to see me. There is something wrong in them or in me. Wherever the fault may lie, you see, as a leader, I am ruled out. . . .

I do not think that the movement will succeed in Trichur. The Central Organization should be in Ernakulam. . . .

Yours very sincerely,
(Sd.) C. Achyutha Menon.

Later on, when I sent him the set of rules I had framed, he wrote on 21-12-1088, "As per the Samajam Rules, I have only to say that Ambalavasis should be included among us. I quite approve of the rest." Lastly, on 8-3-1099, he wrote to me thus on the subject: ". . . I am glad that you have succeeded in forming a Karayogam at Ernakulam. What is wanted is a central organisation; Karayogams being formed in all important villages and treated as amongst of the central organisation. It is however the first step that counts, and I am glad that you have it." There, as in the former two letters, he pleaded ill-health as an excuse for his inactivity. I no longer repaired, never

permitted myself to be dejected. But how slowly things moved will be seen from the dates of these entries in my diaries.

1920--May 19. Hearing that Mr. A. Sankara Menon is keen on defending the rights of the Nayers and developing their present condition, I went to him and had a long talk on the subject with him. He is in accord with the major part of my plan to have a Nayar Karayogam in every village of the State, an annual conference in different important centres of the representatives of these village assemblies, and an organ to carry on propaganda work and to protect our interests. 1923--June-8. Drafted rules for Karayogams and for a central Nayar Samajam.

1943--August-24. Met at Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon's place to discuss the scheme and the rules. Besides Mr. K. M., there were present Messrs. Marayi, Amba, Appu Menon and myself. We carefully went through them, and approved them with slight changes, here and there. Marayi thus complimented me, on parting, in Malayalam, "എന്റെ വരുമ്പിടത്തു, എന്റെ കാര്യം എന്റെ പേരിൽ" ("Credit must be given him. When he starts a thing, he will never let it go.")

1925--October-11. Local Karayogam meeting. The memorandum and the articles of association were passed with a view to register the society. The articles are the rules originally framed by me. 1928--January--21. Cochin Nayar Samajam meeting at Trichur. Messrs. V.K. Kochunni Menon, Appu Menon and myself went from Ernakulam. Mr. Pattathil Narayana Menon presided. Mr. K.M. and myself were elected to the Executive Council.

I take a pleasure to record that Mr. Punnala Kochu Krishna Menon and Mr. Kopparambil Govindan Nambiyar worked very hard for the cause of the *Cochin Nayar Mahasamajam*. Soon after the retirement of Mr. P. P. Menon, the work was continued by Mr. P. P. Menon and Mr. K. M. Menon.

sed him to accept the Presidentship of the Samajam. He reluctantly consented to comply with my request which he said was like "an order from a patriotic leader". I went to Adoor, (on 11-5-1929) where the Nayar conference was to be held, to attend the annual meeting of the Samajam and to see that Mr. Damodara Menon is elected as President. At that meeting, I also insisted that a paid person must be appointed to organize Karayogams throughout the State and offered to contribute sixty rupees yearly for that purpose. Others also came forward to support my propositions, so that resolutions on both these points were passed with the unanimous consent of all those who were present. I came away soon after the business meeting, as I could not possibly wait to attend the conference. Mr. Damodara Menon's presence at the head of the Samajam served as a great asset to it. He was always known for his hard, systematic work; and he was also respected by every Nayar in the State. He tried to put life into the movement, and to remove all difficulties and dissensions wherever they existed. I remember going with him to different parts of the State to smoothen differences and make matters straight in Karayogams.

He resigned his place on 25-9-1932. On my earnest appeal to them, Mr. U. Kaudir Menon and, then, Mr. Kuppakhat Govindan Menon took up the office for some time. But they did not remain there long. On 14-12-39 Mr. Kaudir Menon, in reply to a letter of mine to him in connection with certain difficulties over the publication of the *History of Kerala*, wrote to me a long letter, in which the condition of our community also he touched. "I would request you not to think of resigning your office of the Vice-President of the Nayar Samajam at least for the time being. The Nayars, as a community, have lost much of their influence and power on account of their vanity, disunity, and their unwillingness to accept a leader, and such

other causes. Their future is indeed very gloomy unless we are able to get hold of a band of earnest workers ready to do selfless work under the wise guidance of men like you. As you said the other day as President of the Reception Committee at the annual conference of the Cochin Nayar Mahajana Sabha, held at Ernakulam, there is no use of passing resolutions never intended to be carried out It is absolutely necessary that some of us should meet and decide as to what should be done to bring about a change in the mentality of the people.

I have not yet decided as to what I should do after retirement I have to speak to you a lot about myself, but I reserve it for a future occasion with my best wishes,

Yours very sincerely

(Sd.) U. Kandir Menon.

I have been a life-member of both the Samajam and of the Ernakulam Karayogam from the beginning and have similarly been on the Executive Committees of both. For a short while, I had to cut myself off from the Committee of the Samajam. In 1108, the annual meeting and conference of the Mahasamajam were held at Ernakulam. I was the President of the Reception Committee. Mr. A. Sankara Menon was then the President of the Executive Committee. Both of us worked very hard to make the conference a decided success. Because of certain statements he made in a deposition in the Amkarath family case which, according to certain well-wishers of the Nayers and several well-meaning, educated Nayers, were derogatory to the status of our community, I began to receive letters to warn me that there would be trouble if he stood for re-election. On 16-3-1933, that is, three days before the meeting, I was approached by Messrs. P. Damodara Menon and C. Sankara Menon to request me that I should accept the Presidentship. I told them I would not accept the honour. One of them

P. Damodara Menon, remarked that it was my bounden duty to take up the place. When they found that I was unyielding, their choice fell on Mr. Karim-petta Achyuta Menon who accepted the post on the condition that I too should be on the Committee. That I was prepared to satisfy. When Mr. Sankara Menon's name was proposed for re-election, there was a counter resolution that, for reasons stated, he should not be elected. I spoke against it. An open rupture was avoided by Mr. Sankara Menon's withdrawal from the contest. Mr. Achyuta Menon was elected as the President and I as the vice-President of the committee. But, then, we both found that certain young social reactionary members of the Committee wanted to implement one or two dormant resolutions of a previous Conference. They were impracticable and, what was worse, their insistence would, we thought, be prejudicial to the vital interests of the Nayars. So, both of us resigned our places. I was, then, distinctly told by several members of the Committee that I should be the President and that body would solidly stand by my directions. However, I judged it discreet to remain outside that Committee. It was only for a short while. For I was again soon elected into the Committee.

In 1114, while at Ooty, I got a telegraphic message from Mr. A. Sankara Menon that the Mahasamajam had unanimously elected me to be the President of the yearly conference which in that year, was held at Kodakara. I cut short my stay in the hills and came back. While at Kodakara, I had the pleasure of visiting with my wife our friend Dr. C. N. Menon of the Benares University and his mother in their house which was close by the place of our meeting. We all tried to rehabilitate our Mahasamajam. It has, however, to be confessed that the Mahasamajam is considerably gone done in its enthusiasm in the past and to-day is a decrepit one, but gave them my reasons for resigning.

machine to register resolutions. But that is not so with the local *Karayogam*; it is doing something, though not much. To Mr. A. Sankara Menon and Mr. Marayil Nannu Menon are due the credit of working whole-heartedly for putting up, under the auspices of the *Karayogam*, the *Diwan's Memorial Hall*, to keep green the grateful memory of the *Diwan Sankunni Menon* and *Govinda Menon* of the *Thottakkatt* family. For collecting funds for building the Hall, Mr. Sankara Menon and myself went out together to Trichur and Mattancherry, while, at *Ernakulam*, I worked with two or three other members of the *Karayogam*. Mr. Sankara Menon's father was a life-long dependant of theirs and lived, even after his retirement, under their shadow. They also helped Mr. Govinda Menon, one of Sankara Menon's uncles, during one of his calamities. Thus Mr. Sankara Menon is under a personal obligation to do this bit of duty to the memory of these two great men. Of his uncle, Mr. Govinda Menon, I wish to say one word. I used to call him *Govinda-ammann* (uncle G. M.). Govinda Menon, Kidtunni Menon of the East *Thottakkatt* and my father were the pet aversions of *Diwan Venkat Rao*. He could not harm Mr. Kidtunni Menon. My father, being a clerk directly under him in the *Huzoor Office*, he sent to *Dafina* to buy tobacco. During his trip to and from *Ceylon* in a *pattamar*, my father had to undergo unnumbered privations. So, on his return, he took long leave for six months. The *Diwan* was on the look-out to get him back for further ill-treatment. When H. H. came back from *Coolin* to *Ernakulam*, after the annual *Gonapati-Homam* and *Bhagavati-seva* in a *Karkidagam*, the *Diwan* went to the *Huzoor* jetty to receive him. My father was then with H. H. Then H. H. told the *Diwan*, “എന്റെ ഒരു അംഗീകാരം എന്തെന്നു പറയുക?” (What is one of my acknowledgements?) “എന്റെ അംഗീകാരം?” (My acknowledgements?) “എന്താ?” (What?) (Bayer! why do you search for Panickar? He has not made his appearance! he is not here.)

That opened his eyes, and so my father was safe from his unwelcome attentions after that. Mr. Govinda Menon suffered worst at his hands. But the Diwan only half-succeeded in his malicious purpose. My father was able to get him out of his clutches in an incredibly short time. They were good friends, and Govinda Menon never forgot this golden deed of his comrade in office. When I was a child, I remember being carried to him more than once, on the broad shoulders of his servant Narayanan Nayar, and returning, loaded with toys and sweets, after a hearty breakfast. He was a very nice person and lived in a handsome fashion. These facts I got from my mother, and, later on, with dramatic details, from Messrs. V. K. Kochunni Menon and Palliyil Kochu Govinda Menon.

The ground on which the Tottakkad Diwans Memorial Hall stands consists of a plot given us, under a trust-deed, by the Eastern Thottakkad house, and an unused, public tank which the Durbar allowed us to use for this purpose. The Committee in charge of the construction of the hall had to work under adverse circumstances. The war, the economic depression, and the fact that the two Diwans lived and worked long ago, were factors against those who had to go about to collect funds. At one time, it was given out by somebody that the hall would be used as a cinema-theatre. That report also was a point against them; and, personally, I had to do a lot to nullify the effect of this false alarm. From the beginning, I was for constructing a building within our means. I was dead set opposed to contracting debts. Further, this hall, I said, would not be of much use to our community. Consequently, I wanted to put up a Bhajana-Mutt, a sort of a prayer-room, a small hall where our ladies, especially, can gather to hear Puranas and religious discourses, and which can also be used to celebrate marriages and so on. I wanted also to establish

in the library of religious and useful books which

would be particularly useful to our ladies. That place it was my idea must also serve as a continuation school where our grown-up girls and even elderly ladies could study some house hold arts and cottage industries and learn nursing and first aid, Sanskrit and music. I said that Mr. Marayil Nannu Menon and myself would find funds for these. But Mr. A. Sankara Menon stoutly opposed it on the ground that our work would stand in the way of the hall. He alone knew how. Several of the Committee members warmly welcomed my suggestion. But, being of a peace-loving nature, I was not prepared for a fight. I moved myself to the background to wait for better and more reasonable days. On a former occasion, when the idea to start a paper to espouse the cause of the Nayers, he tried to throw cold water on the project. However, the requisition to start a paper met with a ready response from several others. But he came round afterwards when he found us forging ahead.

"My dear Krishna Menon,

I am not, as I told you, against the newspaper venture. But, as a Sircar servant, I cannot be on the committee or take any prominent part. The only doubt that I had was whether the thing cannot be postponed till the Kanyas had been organized, which, in my humble view, require all our united effort to the fullest extent. Since all of you have resolved that it should be started at once, I am also willing to contribute my share of pecuniary help.

Yours very sincerely,

(Sd.) A. Sankara Menon."

We had never asked him to be on the committee. Several officers assisted us liberally with their donations. But we never asked for nor received any financial aid for the paper from Mr. Sankara Menon. Nor was he correct when he wrote that he was "not against any newspaper venture." It is a set of

I framed for starting Karayogams and a Central Committee to control their working. I had made provision for the publication of a weekly or a monthly for the purpose of education and propaganda. This was circulated among Messrs. C. Achyuta Menon, V. K. Kochunni Menon, P. Damodara Menon, Kar. Achyuta Menon, A. Sankara Menon, M. Krishna Menon and P. Krishna Menon. On that paper, Mr. Sankara Menon wrote, on 1-1-1909, "It is good to have associations with the village as unit. But, for various reasons, I do not agree with the necessity for having a magazine or paper conducted by the Central Committee."

We issued the following appeal:—

"It is proposed to start a Malayalam Weekly. It will work on loyal and constitutional lines for the improvement and progress of our country in all directions. Those who wish to join us will kindly sign below and will have to subscribe one hundred rupees each (in instalments) to run the paper. Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon along with two others will for the present supervise the work and direct the policy of the paper. After a year's experience, formal rules for the future guidance of the paper will be framed by the share-holders at a meeting that must be convened for that purpose." About 65 gentlemen promised to become share-holders of the concern, though, when it came to actual payment, the numbers dwindled down to about 20. Still, that was something. We held two or three preliminary meetings at the residence of Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon when we considered several important points connected with the paper. Of two, the ones held on 12-11-1902 and 9-2-1908, I have kept minutes of the proceedings.

The first board of management was constituted thus:—

Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon -	Chairman.
Mr. K. Govindan Nambiyar -	Secretary and
	Manager.

Mr. V. K. Narayana Menon - Treasurer.
 Mr. M. Narayana Menon - Editor-in-Chief.
 Mr. M. Krishna Menon; and) Other members.
 Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon.)

And the following matters were settled at the second meeting:—

- (1) The paper shall be started early next Vrischigam.
- (2) The yearly subscription shall be Rs. 5/-.
- (3) Mr. C. Narayana Menon is to be the Secretary, as Mr. K. G. Nambiyar has expressed his inability to hold the place.
- (4) A prospectus is to be printed and widely circulated.

The brunt of the work fell on Mr. M. Narayana Menon and myself. To get at a good, competent person who might be appointed as a paid editor, then to canvas for share-holders, we went to Trichur, Trippunithura and other places a number of times. When we two and Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon found we could not satisfactorily attend to this work along with our professional duties, we sold the goodwill towards the end of 1103, with the leave of those who had paid to run the paper, to one individual in Trichur, on our being assured by Vakil Mr. Kannankath Rama Menon, B.A., B.L., that he would personally supervise the work. For want of support, literary and financial, the paper had, I heard, finally to be stopped.

Sreemathi V. K. Parukutty Nethyamma desired to establish a mutt at Trichur to be called the *Sri Rama Varma Bhajana Mattom* for the exclusive benefit of the Nayar community. She spoke to me about her wish and briefly outlined the scheme she had in her mind. As directed by her, I drafted the constitution and on May 12, 1918 gave it, as requested by her, to Mr. Kenattinkara Karunakara Menon. On August 18, he returned it to me, remarking that he was against the institution of any such mutt in the

and, curiously enough, also opposed to any elaborate set of rules for its working. The consort was against him on both the points. So, in order not to offend him, she delayed over the project, and registered the memorandum and articles of association only in 1097 (1922). The original Committee of management consisted of Messrs. V. K. Sankara Menon (President), C. Parameswara Menon (Secretary), (a son of Mr. Karunakara Menon) Karimpetta Achyutha Menon, U. Kandir Menon, K. Kochugovinda Marar and myself. The institution was subsequently placed under the control of the State Devaswom Department.

Mrs. A. Velayudha Menon, one day in the middle of 1102, came and told me that the lady Nayar students of the College were being put to great difficulties for want of housing accommodation for them. Hostel conveniences existed for all communities except caste Hindu girls. She also said that she had already spoken about this to her uncle Mr. A. Sankara Menon. So, Messrs. Sankara Menon, Marayil Krishna Menon, Chakyatt Narayana Menon and myself went about collecting the necessary funds for starting a Hostel for Nayar girls. Of course, our idea was that it should take in other caste Hindu girls as well. The place we pitched upon was the house of my late brother-in-law, Mr. Venkat Row, which was then owned by the widow of his brother, Mr. Rajaram Rao, who was at Trivandrum. I sent the clerk of Mr. Rajaram Rao to her. Though it was already agreed to be given to the local District Judge on a rent higher than what we could offer, she kindly said that she could not possibly refuse a request from me. I thanked her for her generous gesture. We called the hostel the *Hinda Stha Sadanam*. It was worked under a Committee of ladies with Mrs. A. Velayudha Menon as its Secretary. The other members were Mrs. P. Narayana Menon, Mrs. A. Sankara Menon, Mrs. M. Krishna Menon, Mrs. in *Trivandrum* Mrs. C. S. Danikkar and

Lady Dr. C. V. Sankarambal. The last kindly lived in the hostel as the Lady Superintendent. The Honorary gentlemen visitors were Messrs. P. Nanyana Menon, M. Krishna Menon, S. K. Subramania Iyer and myself. The first report that lies before me shows the care and caution with which we planned the working of the institution; for we knew that a wrong step will mark it, and even the whisper of a bad name will spell its disaster and mean disgrace to all connected with it.

A few of the Nayar servants of Ernakulam came to me with a request to lead them in the formation of a Union among them for self-improvement. To see what they really wanted, I asked them to convene a meeting of those who were likely to join the movement. They could gather together only after their daily work was over. They met at 10 at night in the premises of my residence. We then pieced together the objects of the Society. I was also able to hear from them their wants and wishes. Then I drafted the rules which were formally passed at another meeting which lasted from 10 to 2 at night. That was a great strain on me. However, on 1112-8-9, the Nayar *Blerthya Samajam* was formally inaugurated by me. Under it, there were a library, and a night school to teach reading and writing in Malayalam to those of the members who were illiterate. But I told them distinctly that they must manage these themselves or get others to do it, as I could not afford, from my age and nature of my physical constitution, to keep late hours to discuss their difficulties and to find solution for them. I gave a number of books to their library as it was my custom to give to several reading rooms intended for backward bodies and communities.

Mine is a large family now disintegrated into several branches, and residing in several localities. Our Marumakkathayam joint family system was not, after all, a bad one, though, latterly, through the selfish and avaricious conduct of some of the members,

senior male members, it lost favour with many individuals of our community. It had several redeeming features about it which upheld the prestige of the Nayar race and gave its great men and women a wide latitude to distinguish themselves. But there is no use now of praising its vanished glories. They are gone far beyond any recapture. But I thought it would be a desirable consummation if, once a year, all of us could gather and spend a day or two together in frolicsome festivities and even serious talk over family and social affairs. Those whom I sounded on the subject agreed with my proposal. So, on the invitation of my eldest sister and myself, a good number of our family members once met under our roof, gave their approval for the set of rules framed by me for the conduct of the Thottakkatt Samajam, and subscribed to raise a small fund. Once again we met in an East Thottakkatt house. Then the attendance gradually diminished, and we had to discontinue our meetings. But the fund raised stood in good stead to meet the marriage expenses of one, and the funeral rites of another of a poor branch, and the rest was deposited in the Nayar Bank in the name of Srinathi T. Madhavi Amma, the last Lady Treasurer of the Samaj. She is a daughter of my friend Dr. C. Ramanni Menon. She writes English and Malayalam nicely, and plays on the veena well. She is a level-headed lady whom I like very much. Her brother, Dr. Bhaskara Menon too is one whom I sincerely like. He is a D.Sc. in medicine of the Madras and London Universities. Like his father, he is a man of few words and a very clever physician. He lost his wife, a very lovable young lady. It was a terrible shock to him. I advised him to read the Gita and find solace there. When he lost his brother, a year after, he wrote to me. "I shall always remember with gratitude your advice to read the Gita. There I find solace for everything in life. It has in 2007 still given me of me, and sons, that I don't

know how I could have been able to bear this grief."

Let me close this chapter with a reference to the Tunjath Gura Madham at Chittur, an institution which is capable of creditable expansion and which deserves the active support of every Nayar, wherever he may chance to be. To put it on a more solid and wider basis, I had several talks with my friends, the late Mr. C. S. Gopala Panikkar and Mr. Ambat Kutti Krishna Menon. We wanted to tour all through Kerala to popularise it and to collect funds for it. But, for want of genuine enthusiasm, my efforts served no useful purpose. However, I felt happy when I was able to prevail on Sir T. Vijayaraghava Chari to give a substantial grant to erect a decent building for it. After the place is ready for occupation, he kindly said he would give another generous grant to start a religious library there. The Mutt was not fortunate to get it, as he left the State before it could pray for the grant.

X. MY DAYS ON COMMITTEES.

I had been on several Committees. On some I still am. A few thought that it was a hobby of mine to be a member of committees; while others remarked that there could be, as a Malayalam saying goes, "no decoction without dried ginger." Those not affected with the green-eyed jealousy, and those charitably disposed to men and things, gave out that the government nominated me to committees because I could be relied on for the due discharge of my duty uninfluenced by any other consideration. Criticisms like these never affected me. I have never been a candidate for membership of any committee. Before acceptance, I asked to myself only two questions: As a member, shall I be of any service to my country? Can I be able to do the work entrusted to me? If I am satisfi-

these two points, I straight away accepted the place. I liked team-work and would do all in my power to pull on amicably with my colleagues. But, for the sake of buying peace, I would never offend a rule or brush aside the dictates of my conscience. Allegiance to this principle occasionally forced me to go against the grain of some people which naturally exposed me to unpleasant talk or to biased and malicious remarks in irresponsible newspapers. These never unnerved me nor disturbed my digestion or sleep.

The Text-Book Committee is the first official Committee to which the Government nominated me as a member. My diary has these entries in connection with that.

9—10—1911. I find I am made a member of the Text-Book Committee. It is a pity that the authorities concerned had not the courtesy to consult me on the point. When referred to for advice, my revered master said that he too was not written to before his selection as a member of the same body. I remarked that he was an officer, while I was not, and that made some difference. To this he replied thus: "I am not an officer to select books for schools. You better not be a stickler to formalities in matters like this. Mr. Banerji might well have thought that you would gladly accept the place." So I accepted the place without any demur.

13—1—1912. Attended the Text-Book Committee meeting. Mr. Davies kindly introduced me to Mr. Glyn Barlow with whom I talked for a short time. The books were all arranged on a long table round which the members sat. But when he found that I was not passing any remark on any book, Mr. Davies, the Chairman, asked for my reason for my silence. I said it was not possible for me to decide whether a book was suitable to be prescribed as a book

for study until I read it with some care. "What would you suggest then?" he asked me. "Why? You could circulate them among the members." A few other members also fully fell in with my view.

15—1—1912. Wrote to Mr. Davies in detail about the procedure that might be adopted for circulating the books.

• As a result of this representation, books began to be circulated in wooden boxes with a note book in which the members were requested to enter their remarks about the books contained in each box. This practice continued till the authors and book-sellers were told by a Gentle notification that they should send to each individual member, within a prescribed time, a copy each of the books intended for the consideration of the Text Book Committee. With the advent of this practice, representatives of firms and exporters began to reach members with solicitations and letters of recommendation to have their books prescribed for study in the several schools of the State.

I never encouraged these. I told them bluntly that, if they wished to draw my special attention to any particular point in favour of their books, they might give them to me in writing. I am afraid that this did not satisfy them. For, once, Mr. I. N. Menon, the Director of Public Instruction, who was then the Chairman of the Committee, told me, in open meeting, that there was a complaint against me that I did not permit people to interview me in connection with the books. I was glad he gave me an opportunity to put forth my views on this subject. I wound up my remarks by saying that, instead of encouraging the authors and agents in that habit, the Government should prohibit them from coming to us, as was being done elsewhere. Neither the Chairman nor any other member had to say one word against my position and the principle that lay behind it. For they knew the scrupulous attention that I paid to the books.

never, by frowns or favours of any, be forced to deviate from the dictates of my conscience. I know at times I had behaved to some with brutal bluntness. But I am still to learn how I could be civil when certain agents or some writers of particularly bad books came to me not only to disturb me in my serious, legitimate work, but also to praise me and their books, to decry others and their works, and to cast reflections on the conduct of some committee members. All that I could do then, I believe, was to plainly tell them that they had come to the wrong person and to politely show them the way to go on. That I have done; and, very probably, may do hereafter, in spite of the uncharitable criticism, now and again, levelled against me by a mean, malicious scribe of a particular organ, the editor and proprietor of which regard me as the pet aversion of his employers. For their spite and their opinions I have never cared; nor have they injured me in the least. For the intelligent public, like Chicago realised the true nature of that man's work. Some agents were good people. They understood me correctly, appreciated my principle, and realised that no good book would go undefended by me. They talked - two or three were well informed - and on several occasions, and when I had leisure, I would let them talk a good deal. On parting, I used to tell them, "Now you can write to your friend that you interviewed me and had a long talk." They took me in a sporting spirit.

Once, there were two books on the same subject, one of which was written by two acknowledged scholars of Malayalam, and the other by a correspondent of a paper. When it was taken up at the meeting, I was the only member who remarked upon its unsuitability. Many said that it was, as a class-book for students, better of the two. Then, I pointed out a few of the palpable errors in it even on elementary matters. ~~and then~~ ~~the mistakes, which you~~ refer for a

diplomatic reason. The majority thereupon decided that it could be accepted only after revision. The curious part of the whole matter is that it was revised, and used as a text-book by the department, before it was approved after the revision, by the Committee, and that when a better book was readily available. This novel procedure created, I subsequently heard, quite a stir and that there was a day's debate on this book at a sitting of the Legislative Council. After I did my duty in the Committee, I never cared to enquire as to the course of any book. But, in connection with these two books, I was sorry to hear that one to whom a trenchant criticism of the accepted book was confidentially submitted by one of the two authors of the rival publication, was dealt with in a way that was not proper.

Although, in theory, the proceedings of the Text-Book Committee meetings were considered confidential, it is sad and strange that certain interested persons got correct reports of it, immediately after the close of the deliberations of that body.

Anyway, soon after that meeting, a particular organ began to attack the work of the Malayalam Improvement Committee of which I happened to be the President. So, I thought it expedient to keep Sir Shanmukham Chetty, the Diwan, informed of what had taken place, so that he might assess the vile criticism at its true value. After hearing me, he said, "I know more than you know of this matter. But, please do not worry over these malicious attacks. You just go on with your work as these never mattered." And I must here gratefully acknowledge that he did stand by me, sanctioned my requests, and gave me enough money to bring out certain valuable works in spite of objections from other sources.

I was a member of the Text-Book Committee of this State for several years. There was a fortunate break. Again I was nominated.

it was Mr. Herbert who selected me, I went to him and requested him that I might be excused from undertaking the work. Then he said with some warmth, "I get a number of complaints about the working of that Committee. Some are serious. You must be there for at least six months, so that I might know the correct situation." I knew the "situation" even before I went in; and my experience there only substantiated my knowledge about it. It is not my intention to make any record of it here. But I did inform both Mr. Herbert and Sir Shanmukham Chetty as to what I thought of it, and told them, as my deliberate opinion that the only way to prevent the scandals was to change the nature of the constitution of the Committee, and for the Government to undertake the publication of the necessary text-books for all the classes from the Infant Standard to the School Final Class. This latter scheme, if carried out, will also give permanency to the books, will bring in a better and more suitable sort of books, and be a source of a desirable and substantial income to the State which has to spend many lakhs of rupees under the head of education. Both the Diwans were impressed with my suggestion; Sir Shanmukham did something to relieve the tension of the public outcry, while Mr. Herbert was helpless, towards the close of his career, to carry out his decisions. The last letter that he wrote to me on the subject contained these words: (16—3—1935). "Thank you so much for your letter I was very sorry that you left the Board of the Leprosy Asylum visitors. Please do not leave the Board of Studies. I will look into the matter to which you refer."

Before I take leave of this Committee, to one point I wish to refer with pleasure. It was a source of joy to me to distribute the books I got, as a member of this Committee, among several institutions, such

Kalati, Leper Hospital, libraries run by Pulaya Samajams, by Mrs. Verghese at Thiruvalla, by Carpenter Assan Nilacanthan, Sankaramath High School at Adoor, the local Sircar Girls' School etc. Poor students would, now and then, come for these books, while many of the small books with pictures would go to the children of our friends and those of certain other visitors as well.

To the *Lepet Anglam Board of Visitors* I was chosen on 10-3-1915. Then it was under Dr. Coombes, the Chief Medical Officer. We were friends, and occasionally used to visit each other. Now and again, he would request me to go and play tennis in his place. Even when on furlough, he used to write to me. Here is a note from London, dated 23-3-1913. "I promised to write to you, and, as the spirit moves me, I am doing so. I arrived in London 10 days ago. I have taken a 3 months ticket in the Post-graduate Medical Association to enable me to visit all the principal hospitals in London. What vast strides they are making in Surgery. There is no doubt a medical man needs to visit England every 5 years or so if he wishes to keep abreast of the times. (The same remark was made by Dr. C. Ramunni Menon after his return from England). Tell Raghavendran (Dr. D. R. Rao, who retired as a Chief Medical Officer) I am taking down a lot of notes for his benefit. You and Mrs. Krishna Menon must try and visit England some day. I can assure you it is money well spent. It won't be long before I come back. I feel the time passing very quickly, and already over a month of my leave has gone by. I think that is all of the moment. I hope this will find you and Mrs. Krishna Menon and the children well." He was a lover of the pipe. Once I chanced to send him a nice one. He was delighted to have it, and spoke to his friends and wrote to me about it in grateful terms. "April 15. What a nice quaint pipe! It is very kind

of you indeed to think of offering it to me and many thanks for the kind thought. *

"I wish you would come whenever you can and have tennis in my court. Mr. Narayana Iyer and Mr. Varugis (Judge of the Chief Court) have promised to come sometimes.

"Can you and Mrs. Krishna Menon come on Thursday? I am giving a small At Home and you both will know almost every one. Come about 5.30. I shall be so glad."

Only once he disappointed me. There was a medical man in Ernakulam, whom some of us wanted to assist to rise in his profession. He was then passing his days in a slough of dependency. So, Mr. Karim-patta Appachand Menon, Mr. Parakkal Krishna Menon and myself, with Dr. Connors a joint letter. We knew that Dr. Connors could easily meet him provided we insisted on a place. He studiously remained silent. Long after he told me that the persons on whose behalf we wrote, had not properly behaved to him. Our doctor friend, even to this day, I believe, is not known of our attempt to assist him.

It was Dr. Connors' evident wish that suggested my name to be appointed to the Leper Asylum Board. The order of appointment was R.O.C. No. 1675 of 1910, dated 10-3-1910. A few of my friends advised me to decline the place, because they feared that my frequent visits to the Leper Asylum (now it is called Leper Hospital) would expose me to the infection. I felt no hesitation in responding to this God's call to serve the suffering. The Asylum was then located in the island of Vendurathy; and, on certain appointed days, the visitors would be rowed over in a Sincor Boat. I soon realised that the inmates of the Asylum had something or many things to tell us, and that they hesitated or feared doing so when we all went together, and that in the company of the Doctor who had control in visiting the place. So, after the first formal visits,

I used to go there alone in a boat hired by me for each time. This practice gave me an opportunity to hear them free and fully. It also enabled me to carry bread, jack-fruits, mangoes, plantains and other eatables to them, and also to carry my wife, Miss Robbins of the London Mission, Miss Matiskainson of the Salvation Army and others who wished to visit the Asylum, and comfort the lepers by words of cheer and a call to prayer to God Almighty. When I visited the Asylum, I always remained with them for a few hours, hearing their complaints, mainly about their diet and other matters, advising them as to how best they could usefully employ their time in reading, gardening, playing and in praying. I started a library for them. For this I got some financial help from Paliyath Valiya Jagan and Azhikal Shenoy to whom I appealed for it. I myself, now and again, sent books to add to the original stock; and, as the President of the Rural Library Committee, it was my privilege to put the Leprosy Hospital Library on to the list of Rural libraries. From 1915, I have been sending them a weekly packet of Malayalam newspapers. There was a small room for devotional purposes for the Christians. I provided on my friend, Diwan Bahadur Dr. Varghese, who succeeded Dr. Coombes, to give a similar room for the Hindus. He kindly acceded to my request. My wife sent suitable Ravi Varma pictures to be placed in that prayer-room.

They were playing cards; but, with the small cash, that was given them to meet any needed demands or to buy chewing materials, some began to bet. As a result of that, there was a quarrel, and one was about to knife another. So, Dr. Coombes stopped all play with cards. On a somewhat humiliating appeal to me by the lepers to allow them to renew their game at cards, I spoke with some warmth on their criminal conduct. Then, the offender, a fearful looking fellow, came forward and fell weeping.

them I prayed so as to avoid the repetition of a similar incident. Dr. Coombes was rightly unyielding, and I had to take the matter to Mr. Bhore, the Diwan, before leave was granted for the game to be started again. For the help Mrs. Bhore gave me in this request of mine, I felt grateful. Once they staged a play. Besides the inmates of the Hospital, Dr. Verghese and myself alone were present; and we remained to the end. It was 12-30 A.M. when we left them. Poor souls! they were so profuse in their expression of joy over our presence. Whenever there was a poor feeding on a large scale, conducted by the public at Ernakulam, I used to see that a sufficient supply was sent to the lepers at Venduruthy. I have entrusted with the Government a small sum, the interest of which, according to the trust, is to be utilised for giving a feast to these once a year. I induced Mr. Padmanabha Menon also to create an endowment similar to that of mine, which he did.

Ernakulam Town Council. When Mr. V.T. Krishnamachari was the Diwan Peishear here, one day he wrote to me that he would like to see me. I got his letter while I was in court. As soon as my work was over, I went to his office. He spoke to me about the necessity of starting Town Councils in the important towns of the State. He said he proposed to nominate Mr. A. B. Salem as the President of the Mattancherry Town Council, and wished that I should be the first President of the Ernakulam Council. I thanked him for the offer, but told him that I had to regretfully decline it, because I was a total stranger to administrative work and that I was still struggling to come up in my legal profession. I further added that the success of a Town Council would, more or less, depend upon the President who should be a man with some official experience and who could command leisure to in He my remarks.

but did not leave me there. He asked me that, as a citizen of the town, it was my duty to find out a suitable person for the place. He turned to me, he remarked, because, as a friend of his, he could unreservedly seek my assistance. That remark left no hole for me to escape out of the affair. I thought for a few seconds and suggested that Mr. Puthenzheth Gopala Menon, a retired Tahsildar, would prove to be a very able President. I assured Mr. Krishnama Chari that, if he could get him, he would be an ideal President; for, besides his administrative capacity, he was systematic and thoroughly reliable. He requested me to get his consent as the nomination had to be made at once, and said that he was all along counting on my acceptance of the office. I went to my friend and teacher and placed the whole matter before him. "Amiya! I admire your self-sacrificing spirit. Any other young man would have jumped at the offer." But, after this complimentary remark, he began to say that he was not keeping well and wanted rest and all that sort of reasons for evading the offer. Then I had to make a personal appeal to him, and said that, in an unguarded moment, I had committed myself about his acceptance. "Have you given your word?" "In a way." "Then—I shall be there for six months, the most. Not a day more than that." "Oh yes. That will do. By that time you will be able to organise the office and to set the machinery in motion." I felt elated and reported the result of my mission to the Diwan Peishear, who too was rejoiced over my success, and warmly thanked me for the help thus rendered.

On a second occasion, I was about to be similarly caught by the Government, but that time for the Presidentship of the Mattancherry Town Council. On the 1st of March 1916, I got this letter from Mr. J. W. Bhore, the then Diwan of Cochin. "Dear Mr. Prishna Menon, I understand you are at present Secretary to the Library, to the Bar Association, to "

Malayalam Improvement Committee and to the Rate-Payers' Association. Is there any likelihood of your connection with any of these coming to a close in the immediate future? I ask as your hands appear to be so full of work that it is hardly a kindness to propose to ask you to do anything more. Yours sincerely, (Sd.) J. W. Bhore."

I thought I would go and personally explain matters to the Diwan and offer my services for anything that he might want me to do. Fortunately, as it turned out to be, he was not in his place; but his confidential clerk gave me a distant hint which indicated that I was wanted for the Mattancherry Town Council. I thanked him for the hint, and told him that I proposed to send a non-committal reply to the Diwan, but that I would thank him to make the Diwan understand that I was not in for it. So I answered the Diwan by saying that not one of my secretaryships was of my seeking, and that, in spite of the work on hand, my humble services were at his disposal. Subsequently, I came to hear that it was His Highness the Maharaja's command that the place should, in the first instance, be offered to me, while Mr. Bhore was anxious to give it to Mr. K. J. Guna Pal. Therefore, when next I went to pay my respects to His Highness, I submitted all the facts to him, and also broadly hinted that for me from Ernakulam to guide the Town Council on the other side of the backwaters would be extremely difficult, and the efficiency of the Council work would considerably suffer in consequence.

In its early days, I was a member of the Ernakulam Town Council for, I believe, three years. It happened in this way. The late Mr. Machar Sankaran Menon, Mr. K. P. Govinda Menon, and half-a-dozen others came to ask for my permission to be nominated for membership. I thanked them for their confidence in me but gave them my reasons for regretfully

declining the honour they wanted to confer on me. They were not satisfied with my arguments; they went to Mr. Pathexhoth Gopala Menon to induce me to stand for my ward. He sent for me and delivered a sort of an ultimatum to me. He asked me what became of the civic responsibilities about which I had expatiated when I went to prevail on him to accept the post of the President, and threatened that, unless I tried to become a member and assist him in his work, he would at once resign his place. I told him, with due respect, that he did not fully realise the difficulties of a struggling lawyer; and yet, out of regard to him, I would allow myself to be nominated on two distinct conditions: besides publishing a manifesto, I should not be asked to go to any one to canvas votes, and to spend a single pie for my election campaign. These were accepted without any haggling. My nominees thought there would be no contest; but what was their surprise when they found another candidate in the field, and that he was backed by a few of those who ought to have enthusiastically supported me. Knowing these as I did, I had absolutely no wonder over their conduct. The contest went on, and I scored a victory, not a creditable one I thought, over my adversary: with the difference of only a very few votes. There was a petition from the defeated candidate against my return, which the Diwan decided in my favour. A suit was filed in the District Court to unseat me, in which the Government too was a party. But, before it came to the stage of hearing, Mr. J. W. Bhorc succeeded Mr. A. R. Banerji, and the suit was withdrawn by the plaintiff. The supporters of the other candidate made me understand that they bore no ill-will at all against me, and they only wanted to vent their ire against Mr. Banerji. I never cared for their behaviour towards me, much less for their belated and undignified explanation. So let the names of all these lie in oblivion.

Once in the Town Council, I took to my work seriously. I started a Rate-Payers' Association in my ward, so as to come in touch with them and know their wants and wishes. I was selected its Secretary. I visited all the roads, occasionally inspected the lighting on them. When I myself began to go to measure the metal for the roads, and to conduct enquiry into the complaints against assessment, there was a confidential hint to me that the former work would be done by the Municipal Overseer, and the latter by the Sanitary Inspector, and that I had only to sign their statements. I refused to do so. That tactless firmness had a potent effect on the Council servants. They knew that I was not to be trifled with, and that I stood for rectitude and efficiency. I also studied the questions that came up for discussion before the Council. All the light-posts in the whole town were first fixed in the places selected by Mr. Kolthari, Santara, Meeson and myself. When we were selected to do this work, we met along with the Overseer and one or two members and discussed the principles we should adopt in fixing the posts. Then, we two personally went with the Overseer to see them fixed in their proper places in a few roads; and, when the Overseer finished the whole work, we two went round to satisfy ourselves that our directions had been correctly carried out. Not a single complaint we had over this work. That fact we regarded as a sufficient compensation for our work.

25th May 1915. Mr. P. V. Philip was telling a lot of things about a responsible clerk of the Town Council to me. So, with his consent, Mr. K.S.M., Mr. Lemos, and myself met in his house this evening, and we four went over all the faults, a few of which were very serious. We resolved to keep the Chairman informed of our talk, so that he might give a timely censure and warning to the clerk. If this will not produce the desired effect, the clerk will have to be sent out.

20th August 1915. Mr. T. Doraswamy Iyer came to ask me if he should accept the Presidentship of the Town Council. I told him that he must accept it, and also improve the tone of the Council and the efficiency of its work. I said that I had no doubts on the matter. Then we talked on several points connected with the Town Council.

He accepted the place and worked earnestly all through his tenure of office, and I had the privilege of co-operating with him to make his administration successful.

In November 1915, I was asked by the Government if I was willing to serve on a Committee intended "to consider what amendments are necessary in the existing" Cochin Municipal and Sanitary Improvement Regulation as that "Regulation and the Rules framed thereunder are found to be defective and need thorough revision."

By the time this Committee began its work, the Government desired the Committee to suspend its work, so that it might have the advantage of the Madras Municipal Act which was then undergoing amendment. I do not think the above Committee was again called upon to continue and complete its work. At any rate, I had not to do anything with it again.

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Nayar Regulation Committee. On 16th September 1917, corresponding to 31st Chingom 1953, I saw my name gazetted as a member of the Nayar Regulation Committee. But, long before that day, I had accepted the offer of the Government of a seat on that Committee. To trace the genesis of this Committee and, generally, its course of work, it will be helpful if I give a few extracts from my diaries on the subject. 7-12-1915. As a result of a talk among a few of us, Mr. A. Sankara Menon and myself began to draft a Nayar Bill.

27-1-1916. Some of us discussed the provisions of the Nayar Bill, as drafted by Mr. Sankara Menon and myself. The necessary changes were simultaneously made in it.

29-1-1916. Mr. K. Rama Menon had undertaken to prepare the draft of the memorial to be submitted to His Highness along with the Nayar Bill. Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon touched it up. They two, Messrs. V. K. Kochunni Menon, A. Sankara Menon and myself met to read it. To collect signatures, we resolved to send copies of it to different centres.

1-4-1916. Went to the Hill Palace to submit the memorial and the bill to H. H. the Maharaja, who graciously asked a few questions about them.

2-7-1916. Had been to the Palace to pay my respects to H. H. Both His Highness and the Consort talked to me about the Nayar Bill. His Highness remarked that there might be some opposition to it from a few Namputaries. His Highness said he heard that a Prince is stoutly opposed to it; also that a certain Nayar Vakil signed the memorial without reading it. About this last observation, I submitted that it was his own fault, if what the Vakil said was true.

23-9-1917. (7th Kann) Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, Mr. P. Damodara Menon and myself met and drew up a tentative programme of work.

Between the 10th of December 1917, when the formal sittings of the Committee began at Ernakulam for the examination of witnesses, to the 31st of May 1918 when they were closed at Tripunithur, we held our meetings at Trichur, Kunnankulam, Vadakkancherry, Pazhayannur, Cranganore, Irinjalakuday, Chakkudy, Chittur and Nemmanur also. Of course, we published our tour programme far in advance, and invited Nayar ladies and gentlemen to give their opinions on the proposed piece of social legislation, orally or in writing. A few of those who had sent written

statements had to be examined on these for their elucidation and explanation. The sitting at the last place was intended only for the examination of non-Nayar witnesses who would be affected by the legislation. Only two Namputhiri witnesses turned up; but their oral answers contradicted some of their written statements. It looked like a put-up fight. On the whole, we had great help from our witnesses, most of whom appeared to have carefully thought over the subject and formed considered opinions on it. Persons from the village parts were particularly shrewd and talked sense. In several places, we were accorded grand receptions, and tea and dinner parties were held to honour us. But they were hard days for me, because I had to be always oscillating between Ernakulam, where I had work in Courts, and the meeting-places of the Committee. Mr. Narayana Iyer, the Chairman, and Mr. Damodara Menon, the Secretary of the Committee, who realised my difficulty and also appreciated my work as a member of the Committee, did all they possible could to smooth my way.

My dear friend, the late Dr. C. Ramanuni Menon, was an out-and-out antagonist of the proposed measure. He made no secret of his views. He was against legalising marriage, against partition; I believe even against giving the right to one to will away one's self-acquired property to one's wife and children or nearest relatives. By a short series of soft questions, tactfully put with brief explanatory comments, his citadel was breached, and he fully yielded to the provisions of the Bill. Members of the Committee and advocates of the Bill, like Mr. Kandir Menon, Mr. Kuppakad Menon and others complimented me for this result. Thereafter, when any difficult witness, with pre-conceived notions, appeared before the Committee, I was given an early turn to handle him.

20th July 1918. Conference over the Nayar Regulation. Besides the members of the Committee, a few

invited gentlemen also were present.

18th August 1918. The whole of this day I was with Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon. We discussed the provisions of the draft Bill.

After I was appointed to the Committee, I spent every available hour in reading books and reports connected with the subject, and in analysing the statements and depositions of witnesses relating to the main provisions of the Bill. Over the question of partition, I was extremely anxious. I am one of those who sincerely believe that the Joint Family System of the Nayers is a great institution. No small credit goes to it for the culture and the prosperity of that very ancient community. The selfishness and the short-sightedness of the Karanavans or the managing members of families introduced injurious elements into the correct working of the system, so that gradually, domestic disquiet and quarrels appeared on the scene. It therefore became enfeebled to fight against the individualist tendencies of the modern world. That is the position in which I found the system when I had to consider it in all its aspects. Can the Bill help it with a chance to improve it? That was the question which I asked myself. Over this point, I troubled Mr. Padmanabha Menon many a time. He favoured partition; he said that was the only working proposition. Wherever I went, during our roving commission to collect materials for our report, I made it a point to go out for walks, both mornings and evenings. I never omitted to question every Nayar whom I met on the desirability of perpetuating the system. The replies I got were far from satisfactory. My faith in God made me visit almost every shrine in the vicinity of the places we halted. That I did to get guidance in my work. When our work was all but completed, I once chanced to pay my respects to His Highness the Maharaja. I submitted to H.H. the plan of the Bill we had prepared, and the provisions for

Thavazhi partition there outlined. Without any tinge of a hesitation, H. H. remarked: "Why do you halt half way?" I knew His Highness was a sincere well-wisher of the Nayar race. I knew also that he was a shrewd, far-sighted and practical statesman. So, his deliberate suggestion that outright individual partition would alone solve the problem of the future of the Nayar was an eye-opener to me. While bowing my head to his decision, I humbly submitted to H. H. the reasons which induced the Committee to take the step it had taken.

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Education Code Revision Committee; Law Committee and First Grade Colleges Committee. By order, R.O.C. No.1978/95, dated 15-1-1920, Government appointed a large and representative Committee of 29 persons to review and revise the Cochin Education Code, and to submit a report with a draft revised Code. Mr. C. Mathai, the Chief Inspector of Schools, was the president, and Mr. L. R. Viswanatha Iyer, the Deputy Inspector, was the Secretary of this Committee. On the same day, that is 15-1-1920, the Government also appointed a Law Committee of 12 persons by its order R.O.C. No.1869/1095, dated 15-1-1920. Similarly, on that identical date, a Banking Committee also was started (vide R.O.P. No.556/95, dated 15-1-1920) to enquire and report upon the Banking facilities then available in Cochin and the measures to be taken to expand the facilities and the degree and nature of the help the Government could give for the development and stabilisation of Banking in the State. Mr. T. A. Doraswami Iyer was the Chairman. With him, there were 34 members on the Committee. Besides a few officials, there were landlords, merchants, managers of industrial concerns on it. I was on all these three Committees. As His Highness the Maharaja particularly evinced a keen interest in the work of the Banking Committee, we expected that some good would

flow out of our labours. If a State Bank or a State-aided Bank with all the needed safe-guards, were to be started, we thought it would develop the commerce and industry of the State, be a model for other Banking concerns in our country, and a wholesome check on the activities of these. Consequently, every aspect of the question was critically examined, and a report on a very practical and safe line was drawn up. Books were studied for this purpose, men in the line were written to for advice, and Messrs. Doraswamy Iyer and C. Achyutha Menon went to Bangalore to study the working of the Mysore Bank on the spot. Before he went, the President sent me this letter:-

Ernakulam,
11-11-1920.

My dear Friend,

I herewith send a draft report. Kindly go through it thoroughly, and make the necessary changes in the matter, argument and language. I shall thank you to let me have the corrected draft on Saturday evening, if convenient. I am going to Bangalore on Sunday.

Yours very affectionately,

(Sd.) P. A. Doraswamy Iyer.

9-8-1920. From 5 to 8 p.m. Mr. Doraswamy Iyer and myself were critically revising the report of the Banking Committee.

But nothing came out of our efforts, and Mr. Doraswamy Iyer and myself felt greatly disappointed over this unwelcome ending.

The *Law Committee* had to draft bills called for by the Government. It had also to submit proposals for new legislation. It was also specially requested to revise the Statute-book by proposing the repeal of obsolete Regulations, the amendment of existing ones, and the making of new laws where such are necessary. The Government Advocate was the Vice-President of the Committee, and Mr. T. G. Ananthanarayana Iyer, was its paid Secretary. When I was asked by the

Diwan to suggest a person for this office, it was I who gave the name of Mr. A. N. Iyer. On a later day, the Diwan told me that, on enquiry, he found that Mr. A. N. Iyer was "about the best man for the job." When I heard that I was to be on the Law Committee, I told the Diwan that he would come in for criticism for nominating me, a District Court Vakil, to it, while there were several prominent Chief Court Vakils. He said that it was not only his desire but it was also His Highness' command that I should be on the committee. He added, "Probably, you yourself will soon find out the reason". He was true, for I did discover the cause soon. For, though the terms of reference covered a wide and very important ground, yet the attendance at meetings was meagre and the enthusiasm for work exhibited was still less.

3-12-1929. For the Law Committee meeting, only the Vice-President, Secretary, and myself were present. The clerk tells me that, besides the Secretary, it is only myself that takes pains for preparing for the meetings. A sad commentary on the patriotic spirit of my lawyer brethren.

5-10-1923. Law Committee meeting for the passing of the Civil Procedure Code. Only Secretary and myself were present. I sent for Mr. S. Rungaswamy Iyer, so that the work may not be delayed.

All the years I was on it, I never lightly treated my responsibility. To equip myself to help the drafting and amending of particular bills, I studied the corresponding enactments of Travancore and British India, read text-books, and even case-law on important sections where there was any difference of opinion as to the interpretation, or any observation as to defective wording. I took a very serious view of the work entrusted to the Law Committee.

Similarly, for my work on the *Education Code Revision Committee*, I studied the systems of education

in Japan, Germany and England, besides those of some of the Native States in India. In a cursory way I had to read a few of the reports while assisting the preparation of a memorial on the subject which the Mahajana Sabha submitted to the Government; and also for sending a memorandum of mine own to the Government on this all-important topic. "The Sabha" the memorial dated 28th Mithunom 1093 concluded, "requests that a Committee of officials and non-officials be appointed as early as possible to inquire into and to report upon the right policy and method for mental, moral, physical and vocational education that ought to be pursued in the future in the light of past experience and the present needs and circumstances of the people. It would be advisable to give that Committee a free hand in revising the existing Educational Code and to suggest in detail the ways and means of improving the system of education and the working of the Educational Department." About my memorandum on Mr. Pope's Code, the Government remarked (vide R.O.C. No. 1447/88 of 23-2-1914), "Excepting the very able criticism which has been submitted by Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon and which will be dealt with in these proceedings, no other criticism or complaints of hardship have been received by the Durbar from any quarter."

Needless to say that I entered into the work of the Revision Committee with zest. I was also a member of the sub-Committee which had to remodel the Code on the basis of the resolutions of the main Committee. I worked very hard. I never failed to press my views with warmth, so that these might not go for default of an earnest and clear presentation. Among officials, besides Mr. Mathai, Messrs. S. K. Subramania Iyer and V. K. Achyutha Menon entered into the spirit of the work; among non-officials, the one person who was unremitting in his toil was Rev. Fr. Francis Vazhappilli, who became the Bishop of

Trichur. His acquaintance, which it was my privilege to make at that time, flowered into a friendship which I valued immensely. Ordinarily, the attendance at the meetings was not encouraging. But, on the day, we dealt with the grant-in-aid provisions, we had a full house.

To minimise the cost of elementary education, I was for giving a fair trial to the pyal system. I was against a heavy curriculum; against a procedure which necessitated the pupils to bolt their meals and to run to schools, and to start work before digestion had set in. I said I would rather not have physical exercise than having it before the students had time to digest their food or in the hottest part of the day. I pleaded for the introduction of certain special courses of studies, of *kututtikal*, *kolattam*, action songs and flag-drill in girls' schools, and of scouting in boys' schools. I advocated for providing in all primary school manual and vocational training, and for starting, in different centres, institutions to impart secondary manual and vocational training to those who desire it. I was for shortening the Primary School Course from 5 to 4 years and for the teaching of English in the 3rd and 4th classes. My views I embodied in a memorandum which was fully endorsed to and signed by Mr. T. A. Doraswamy Iyer also. But it received scant attention at the hands of the President of the Committee. Not only that; without placing it before the Committee, he adversely criticised it. That conduct necessitated a rejoinder which requires publication in this part of my narrative.

Ernakulam,
15th March 1921.

A REJOINDER.

(Cochin Education Code Revision Committee)

1. The President of the Committee appointed to revise the Educational Code has adopted a novel

procedure in the Report of that Committee. On the dissentient note which Mr. Doraswami Iyer and myself submitted—I do not know why the President ignores Mr. Doraswami Iyer—he has taken upon himself the liberty to enter into a criticism. The Committee never met to consider our note, so that “the explanatory remarks” can only be, I presume, those of the President himself.

2. The letter from Mr. V. K. Rama Menon was considered at a meeting, and he was replied to by the President. The reply to Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon, though his letter was not placed before the Committee, also was sent to him before publication. But, in our case, we were left to see the adverse comment in cold print. And, thus, I am put to the necessity of having recourse to this mode of publishing and submitting my humble explanation.

3. The minutes of the meetings will show that, on several occasions, “the lawyer members” had to be absent, as the days or hours or both were inconvenient to them; and on the many times I wrote to the President on the subject, I wrote for others as well.

4. Any one who reads my remarks about the irregular procedure can easily see that the explanation of the president and the attempt to minimise the irregularity by saying that I have taken advantage of it, will not validate it. I should have been a fool not to have taken advantage of it, especially as the procedure was followed at more meetings than one. But I used it not to drive in any “pet proposition” of mine, for I had none, but to place in their true perspective the pet aversions of certain others. And the minutes will show that my attempts had been not altogether fruitless.

5. A reversal of the considered decision of 23 members on the Primary School course and on the teaching of English in the 3rd and 4th classes of Primary Schools by 12 members at a subsequent meeting,

without giving timely warning that these subjects would be discussed afresh, cannot also be justified by questioning me as to whether I "expect English to be taught in pyal schools". Nor do I believe there is anything in the scheme or constitution of pyal schools which prohibits the teaching of English in those institutions. I am also not one of those who think that English can be taught only in schools of the "standard pattern" with the accompaniment of the "standard furniture". I am not for giving undue prominence to the study of English. Before I leave this subject, let me correct an error in the explanatory remarks where it is said that I was present at the discussion of the subject of pyal schools—I was not; I went to that meeting only late in the day.

6. The President says, "Mr. Krishna Menon's statement that the State is already spending under the head of education more than what other Indian States and other civilised countries are spending does not seem to be based on facts". I have nowhere made the statement that is fathered on me. This is what I say: "It would not be disputed that, year after year, our Government is spending a large amount of money for purposes connected with education. But before the imposition of a new cess or tax, the people have a right to be convinced that the Darbar would have to spend more than now for educational development; that retrenchment was not possible in any direction; that, comparatively, it was already spending under the head of education more than what other Indian States and other civilised countries are spending." The words "But before the convinced" have to be read along with "that comparatively, it has already spending spending". That is plain; and it is not fair to extract a part of a sentence, and pin me to a statement not mine. Many such apparently absurd statements from the works of even great writers may easily be held up to the ridicule of the reader

by detaching conditional clauses from the rest of the sentence.

7. Mr. S. K. Subramania Iyer explains the absence of any meeting of the Finance Committee, consisting of Messrs. Doraswami Iyer, Guna Pai, Subramania Iyer and myself in these words:— "You (the President) wrote to the Diwan Peishkar and the Town Council Presidents for the figures and they were sent to my address as desired by you. I collected the figures and handed the Papers to you. What was expected of the Finance Committee was the collection of data regarding taxable incomes, etc. I talked the matter over with Mr. Guna Pai regarding Muttanchery figures, and he delayed the submission of his list. I had a talk with Mr. Doraswami Iyer regarding the same when he told me that the Town Council figures were too low and could not be relied on. It is true that there was no formal meeting of the Committee and, for the matter of that, Mr. Krishna Menon knows full well if there were any formal meetings of the Drafting Committee". Mr. Subramania Iyer was the convener of the Drafting Committee as well, and he might know the fact better than myself. But the work of a Drafting Committee is entirely different from that of the Finance Committee. It is not necessary for all members to meet and draft the Code as directed by the Committee; it is not possible too. It is best done by one, or possibly two; and the draft can be circulated among the rest for such verbal changes as these may deem fit to make. But that is not what the Finance Committee is to do. If it is to collect figures alone, the President or the Secretary can as well do it. Why should the President ask others to send the figures to Mr. Subramania Iyer? And what was the necessity for Mr. Subramania Iyer to 'talk it over' separately with Messrs. Guna Pai and Doraswami Iyer? And because he did not convene a meeting of the Drafting Committee, is that a reason for not

having a meeting of the Finance Committee? The best point of the explanation seems to be that Mr. Subramania Iyer does not attempt to conceal in an artistry of words the defects of his argument.

8. The 'lawyer members' are 'not actual teachers but only laymen' had been the war-cry of a few of 'the experienced heads of Schools' that served on the Committee. And although it was possible for the laymen to carry some of their points in the teeth of the clenched antagonism of a few of 'the experienced heads of Schools', yet, it was only like a humble *chela*, standing far outside the occult circle, that I ventured to suggest of the heaviness of the curriculum. In spite of the taunts and sneers of a wounded educational world, I would appeal to the government, on behalf of the generations of students who would be affected by this curriculum, to kindly look into the question before it is passed.

9. One would have thought that at least our remarks for making provision to impart instruction in the Arts and Crafts of the land, at any rate so as to avoid the danger of having a great and ever-increasing number of discontented citizens with little knowledge and no means to earn a living, and to improve the economic condition of our country, would be accepted by the experienced educationists with grace. But that was not to be. They avow a frontal attack here; and abuse me, 'a stout advocate of economy' for suggesting 'a costly scheme'. Mine is no costly scheme in the first place; and, even if it is, it is worth a decent trial, for the benefits accruing from it would far outweigh the expenditure.

10. I do not wish to enter into other points of the explanatory remarks. As our note was not primed with views and facts that would support the report of the majority on the points on which we differ, the President, perhaps to counteract the force of our remarks, has tried to bring in 'a few laborious nothings

home' with which I have no concern.

T. K. Krishna Menon

Closely connected with this work was my work on the Committee constituted by the Government to formulate a scheme for a First Grade College in Cochin. (R.O.P. No.82/1100 of 4th October 1924.)

On day, I chanced to speak to His Highness the Maharaja about the necessity to start a First Grade College in this State. His Highness asked me to formally address the Diwan on the subject. This is the letter that I then wrote to the Diwan.

Ernakulam, 7th Eanni 1100.

To,

M.R.Ry. P. Narayana Menon, A.L., B.A., I.S.O.,
Diwan of Cochin, Ernakulam.

Sir,

On the question of a Government First Grade College for Cochin, I have the honour to respectfully place these facts before you for your deliberate consideration.

I. Year after year, our students find it extremely difficult to get admission into First Grade Colleges, particularly in Madras, and more so for Honours courses and into Science Sections. There is the contingency of second grade colleges being thrown into the shade as a result of the opinion expressed by the Sadler's Committee in its report. We have to reckon with the fact that First Grade Colleges are springing up even near Cochin and that we are being left behind in the race. And, above all, we have to look to our place in the future when a Kerala University will become a living reality. For these reasons, it is my sincere conviction that, among those who stand for high culture and take a dispassionate view of things, there can be no difference of opinion as to the necessity for the State having a model First Grade

College as early as it can have one. Unless we stir ourselves betimes, the State will not have a fair start, and it may cause unnecessary waste to others. Delay will work danger to us and damage to others.

2. As to its location. The first place that may suggest itself to some is Ernakulam. But I am afraid that that idea will not stand close scrutiny. A fast-growing town, with prospect of having an extensive harbour in close proximity to it is not the place for a College or for a University. The dust and smoke of wharves and coaling stations, the ceaseless sounds, the yells and oaths of workmen, the irritating noise from sirens and whistles and the conduct of the sailors and coolies that frequent taverns and public houses will not be conducive to create or maintain an atmosphere congenial for the upbringing of College students. The existing buildings of the Ernakulam College will not be sufficient to house a First Grade College. Even as it is, we have not sufficient accommodation there, or room for expansion, athletic grounds, football fields and for tennis courts. The cost of acquiring lands in the vicinity will be prohibitive. And if, elsewhere, we put all the College classes together, as it should be done, we can have the advantage of the existing libraries, appliances for teaching sciences and of a few of the professors of the present staff. I think that all will agree with me when I say that for obvious reasons the College should be centrally situated in an ideal site. With a view to ascertain for myself as to whether or not the place now known in common parlance as Anappara site will be an appropriate place for our College, I have visited it more than once. I have no doubt to openly declare that it is an excellent place for a College, provided there will be at all seasons of the year plenty of water in fact I cannot think of a better place.

3. There is another point to which I wish to refer before I conclude this note. There was a talk at

the Conference recently held at the Diwan's residence at Trichur to consider this question about 'pooling the resources' of the State and those of the St. Thomas College at Trichur. My humble opinion is that such a procedure as that will be in the long run a source of complication, of delicate and unending difficulties and of irritation and disadvantage to both parties. It is better that each works out its own scheme, unhindered by any other. And, personally, I question the propriety of a Government going into partnership with a private body. I hold strong views on this subject of the Government College being a self-contained institution, and these were only strengthened by the discussion we had at Trichur.

4. My humble opinion is that we should start the College from the next academic year, and not wait for the completion of the construction of the college buildings. We can, without much difficulty locate it, for an year or at the most two, in a portion of the Second Grade College premises at Kanskulam and begin work in those courses of studies which are possible.

I would therefore request that Darbar with due submission to appoint a small Committee of about five persons to report within a month on this question from its various aspects after consulting a few representative individuals who among others are likely to help the Committee in its deliberations and to start work forthwith on the considered decision of the Government.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Sd/- T. K. Krishna Menon.

The Committee had Mr. C. Mathai as its Chairman and Mr. C. Achutha Menon as its Secretary. The

other members were Messrs. V. B. Venkateswara Iyer, S. K. Subramania Iyer, C. Anthappayi and myself.

The terms of reference included these points: "(1) the need or otherwise for a first grade college; (2) its location; (3) the desirability or otherwise of partnership with any private agency; (4) and the possibility of starting it from the next academic year; and locating it in the college buildings at Ernakulam till permanent buildings are constructed." On the 3rd point alone, I think, Mr. Anthappayi differed from the rest, who held that such partnership might create difficulties, while on all other points the report was unanimous. As to the location, the report suggested Anappam, or, in the alternative, any other central place, near a town but not in it with the necessary facilities.

The First Grade College was started in the Jubilee year of the Ernakulam College, and it was called the Maharaja's College, because His Imperial Majesty the King Emperor conferred on His Highness the Ruler, as a hereditary dignity, the title of the Maharaja just before the raising of the College to the First Grade status.

On 16-12-1921, I got this letter about the
Household Arts and Cottage Industries Committee.

Ernakulam, 14-12-1921.

Dear Sir,

Government propose to appoint a Committee of officials and non-officials to consider and report on the question of affording facilities to adult girls who discontinue their studies or stop after the High School Course for a training in household arts and in at least a few branches of cottage industries. Mr. C. Mathai, Inspector of Schools, will be the President of the Committee. I am directed to invite you to serve the Committee as Secretary, and shall feel grateful for a

very early intimation of your willingness to serve.

Yours sincerely,
Sd. P. Damodara Menon,
Secretary to the Diwan.

As this was the result of a long talk that I had with the Diwan on this subject, I gladly accepted the offer to serve on the Committee as its Secretary.

The order of reference, G. O. dated 2-1-1932, R. O. C. No. 2221 of 1097 runs thus:

II. Courses of training in Hygiene and Sanitation, Cooking and Domestic Economy, Washing and Sewing, First-aid and Nursing, Music and Painting and also perhaps in Malayalam literature might be started.

III. Government propose therefore to appoint a Committee consisting of the following members to advise as to (i) the courses of study, having regard to local conditions that may conveniently be started, (ii) the selected areas where they may be opened, and (iii) the probable cost.

1. Srinathi V. K. Lekshmikutti Ammal.
(Ammuni Amma)
2. Miss A. E. Robbins.
3. Mrs. Velayudha Menon.
4. The Rev. Mother Superiress of St. Teresa's
Convent.
5. Mrs. Kholoff, Mattancherry Hospital
6. Mr. T. A. Doraswamy Iyer
7. " G. Subbuswamy Iyer
8. " C. Mathai President
9. " T. K. Krishna Menon, Secretary.

The rest of the Committee can be briefly told by these extracts from my diary.

31-1-1932. Mr. Doraswamy Iyer alone refused to be on this Committee because of the way in which

the Banking Committee report was shelved. Mr. P. D. M. tells me that he had Mr. Doraswamy Iyer's consent to be put on the Committee.

22-2-1922. Preliminary meeting of the Household Arts and Cottage Industries Committee. There was a thorough discussion on the several points covered by the reference. Great enthusiasm prevailed. Sri. Annamalai Amma took an active part in the proceedings. I have taken full notes of the debate. Before dispersing, it was resolved to invite the opinions of those whom the Committee thought it would be well worth to consult on the subject. A list of them was also prepared on the spot. I am authorised to add to it if any omission is disclosed.

1-4-1922. Household Arts and Cottage Industries Committee met. (I had already circulated among the members a summary of the written opinions received from several ladies and gentlemen. For their valuable suggestions, our correspondents were also thanked by me. After careful discussion, we formulated the outline of a scheme. I am asked to write the report and to circulate it among the members before the next and last meeting of the Committee which is to be on the 12th of May.

12-5-1922. The report was unanimously passed by the members, who thanked me for "the infinite trouble" I have taken over it, and for its "practical excellence." Why all this fuss over it; for I did my duty; and I have only based my report on the resolutions of the Committee. "We need not expect anything from the present Diwan", a lady member remarked. Others echoed the sentiment, I among them.

15-7-1922. When I happened to go to the Hill Palace, H. H. remarked, "The present Diwan doesn't seem to be warm over Household Arts and Cottage Industries"; and the Consort deplored the fact by adding, "ഈ ദിവാൻ കയ്യാളെക്കൂടി കിട്ടിയിട്ടില്ലാത്തതാണ്; അതല്ലെങ്കിൽ, കളരിയിൽ ചേർക്കൂ." (This literally means; either on the chest

of your teacher or trainer in the ring, or out of the ring altogether).

The Committee was constituted during the time of Sri. T. Vijaya Raghava Chari. But, by the time the report was submitted, Rao Bahadur P. Narayana Menon had become the Diwan. He shelved it with the uncharitable remark that it was "a faddists' report". Time and intelligent public opinion have, however, shown he was wrong in his estimate, and his successors have carried out many of the recommendations of this Committee.

Flood Relief Committee. Some day in July 1924, I had to go to Madras for a meeting of the Board of Malayalee Studies. His Highness Appan Thampuran got into the train from Trichur to attend the same meeting. When I took leave of His Highness from the Senate House, he remarked, "Aniyar Menon wants to leave Madras the very day he comes here. But I am going to stay on for another day or two." But His Highness was able to get back to Trichur only after a fortnight, and that by a circuitous route.

I had to return in a hurry as I had to appear in a case early next week in the Irinjalakuday Munsiff's Court. After my work, when I came to the Railway Station, I was told that the line to Kinnakulam was breached on account of the floods, and so I could not proceed that way. Then I asked for a ticket to Trichur. Immediately, there was a phone message that that line too was breached. So, I went back to Irinjalakuday to pass an uncomfortable night. Early, next morning, I hired a jutka and went to Karuppatanna. The last three miles of the road was covered with water. I engaged a cooly and walked not through the road, but over the grounds that were on a high level. Even then, I had to wade through water in one or two parts on my way. Generally, a boat from Karuppatanna to Cranganore would cost one-four annas,

But that day I had to pay three rupees. Instead of the usual punting pole for propelling it, oars had to be used. Even the premises of the Cranganore temple were covered with water. Mr. Payyappillil Raman-kutty Menon was the Deputy Tahsildar at Cranganore. He gave me a generous welcome, and sent his peon to enquire if any steamboat would be leaving to Ernakulam on that day. He came back to say that there was no chance of any boat leaving Kottappuram before the floods had subsided about which he gave a highly tragic account. Mr. R. K. Menon said that he would not permit me, under any circumstances, to leave Cranganore that day. I sent letters to Mr. Kunhi Koon and Mr. P. Kunhi Mohamed, two friends of mine. But it was not possible to reach them. Before the Deputy Tahsildar got up, through the good offices of a peon who kindly accompanied me, I went to Kottappuram. A large steamboat of Mr. Kunhi Koon was fortunately there. I told the Serang who knew me well that he must take me to Ernakulam. "How can I take the boat without my master's orders?" "I shall leave behind a letter to him which this peon will take to him at once. Even if you get no passengers, I shall pay the whole cost of the trip." At once, the boat was got ready and we started with no passengers, except myself, of course, from that place. To own a truth, the force of the current and the roar of the waters frightened me not a little. Till I crossed the Cranganore port, I sat down with my eyes shut. By the time the boat reached Ernakulam by about 11.30 a. m., it had its full load of passengers, many of whom we had to pick up from roofs of houses, small country cofts, and a few from trees. The process of taking them into the boat took time, but it was worth while to spend it. For, otherwise, a watery grave would have been the fate of many. Several persons, who thanked the Serang for saving their lives, were told that the credit went to me. Then they would invariably come to me

to convey their words of gratitude to me. That journey was a weird experience, but I felt happy that I was a source of assistance to many. At Ernakulam, we found it impossible to land at the ferry and Huzur jetties; so we had to go back to the jail jetty. When I reached home, it was 12 p. m. I was told that students with some others had come more than once from the College to take me there. I never stopped to bathe nor even to refresh myself, but went to the College at once, where I found preparations were going on to feed those who were by the floods rendered homeless and without means of livelihood. My son, Gopalan, along with some other scouts had gone with a boat to pick up persons in the parts near the town and which were under water. It was nine at night when I had a bath and my supper. Feeding in the College premises went on for a few days, till the government with the aid of the public, here and elsewhere, made systematic arrangements for the succour of the flood-ridden victims.

To quote from the Report of the Cochin Central Flood Relief Committee, "The month of Karkadagom (July-August) has in these parts the appellation of *Kalla-Karkadagom*. It is a period when the South-west monsoon is on with its full fury, rendering business dull, living dear and public health bad. In the Karkadagom of 1909 (July 1924), these adverse conditions were further accentuated by the unexpected, severe and unprecedented floods which in that year devastated a large part of the Malabar Coast.

"The effect of the floods was appalling The situation created grave anxiety to Government It was so grave that the arrangements originally made were soon found to be inadequate. Urgent steps had therefore to be taken to find out ways and means to administer relief in a satisfactory manner. With this end in view, a public meeting was held in the Ernakulam College Hall on 1-1-1100

The Collection from all sources amounted to Rs. 43,955, of which Rs. 43,032 was spent towards house construction and in the feeding of the poor. To pass the accounts of the Treasurer, who was the Government Comptroller of Accounts, and the draft report on the work done by the Committee, the Committee met on 24-12-1927. Mr. A. K. Sivaramakrishna Iyer, the clerk, worked with sympathy and indefatigable zeal. For anything and everything, he used to indent on my services which I willingly placed at his disposal. He prepared the draft of the report; I touched it up. The Diwan modified it here and there. When it was sent for my approval, the clerk sent it with a note, dated 17-2-1927, in which he said, "I shall prepare a note for your kind consideration regarding other matters. I fully realise that the time is not opportune as you are busy with the Leg. Council work." When we met, I prayed that out of the small balance left, the clerk might be paid a bonus of Rs. 150/-, Rs. 500/- might be given to the Chala'sudy Depressed classes Development Society which was conducting the Pulhya Colony there, and the rest to the Rama Varma Poor House at Ernakulam.

Poor House Committee. Rao Bahadur P. I. Varugis, Mr. V. K. Sankara Menon, the then judges of the Chief Court, and myself wanted, in some way, to help the homeless sick whom we found on the roadside of Ernakulam. About 20 of us undertook to subscribe at once Rs. 100 each. Diwan Mr. Vijayaraghava Chari generously promised to assist us with a place. To select a spot, he, with some of us, went to Vyttila and other adjacent parts. Even after the advent of Mr. P. Narayana Menon as the Diwan, Mr. Varugis and myself did not relax our efforts to get a site, for our contemplated institution.

THE DAYS THAT WERE

Ernakulam 8-10-23.

My dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

A comedy of errors! I arrived at the Diwan's at 5 to 4 and saw him. We waited for you till 4-30. However, I talked the matter over with him. He wanted to entrench himself behind the Ag. Supt., but was dislodged. He has promised to give us what we wanted. Only, we are to send up a scheme to him showing, among other things, what kind of organisation will take over the administration of the charity. He said "Let Anian draw up such a scheme, I shall sanction it".

Yours very sincerely

(Sd.) P. I. Varugis.

I had not given any word that I would go to see the Diwan at that time. Nor, for proper reasons, did I draw up a scheme for submission to the Diwan. Mr. Varugis was informed of my position. Fortunately, at this juncture, we heard that the Ernakulam Municipality had an idea to tackle the problem. Rao Sahib P. K. Verghese, the Chairman at that time, was able to collect a substantial sum from proprietors of circus, cinema and theatrical companies that gave performances in the town. The Christian Women's League, and the Central Flood Relief Committee also contributed for this purpose. I gave him 400 copies of a work of mine as my humble donation. When the Municipality approached the Government for its help, it appointed (vide C. No. 1241/99, dated 1-11-1924) a Committee consisting of the following gentlemen to formulate a scheme for the working of the Poor House at Ernakulam.

Mr. P. I. Varugis, Judge

" V. D. Ouseph, Municipal Chairman

" P. Krishna Menon, Vakil

" T. K. Krishna Menon, Vakil

and Dr. V. Verghese, Chief Medical Officer.

I was asked to draft one in consultation with Mr.

MY DAYS ON Committees

P. I. Varugis. It was circulated among the rest before it was, with a few slight changes, finally passed at a meeting of the committee. The scheme was approved by the Government. (Vide G. O. C. No. 124/099, of 1st October 1925).

"The first Committee under the scheme will consist", so the sixth para of the order runs, "of the following gentlemen in addition to the Chief Medical Officer and the Chairman of the Ernakulam Municipal Council,

M. R. By. P. I. Varugis Averal

" T. K. Krishna Menon "

and " P. Krishna Menon "

From that time up till it was dissolved I was on the committee of management.

"The Poor House is primarily intended for the homeless and destitute poor, who, by reason of age or disease, are unable to work, and have no place in the hospitals and asylums maintained by Government."

Besides an annual grant of Rs. 1200, the Government has given a compound with the necessary structures in it, while the Municipality donates Rs. 900 yearly. It also helps the institution in other ways. The Medical Department deputes a doctor to give medical help to the inmates, and also supplies free the medicines required. A sanyasi of the Rama Krishna Mission is the Superintendent of the House. He has to live on the spot where quarters are provided for him. It is named Rama Varma Poor House after the name of His Highness the Maharaja who deigned at Madras. It is an institution worthy of the generous patronage of the public. I have been always taking a warm, living interest in it, so much so that the Superintendent and the inmates early began to think that no defect will escape my scrutiny, and any genuine complaint of theirs will never fail to have a sympathetic consideration from me.

Malayalam Improvement Committee. On 16-12-1912, I wrote to the Diwan a long letter in which, among other matters, these subjects were also touched: "In connection with the Shashityabdapoorthi of H.H., it will be a generous gesture if you can kindly give, as a bonus, a month's pay to all those whose salary is below Rs. 10 per mensem. It will also be a fitting step if a grant could be made for the encouragement of Sanskrit and Malayalam literatures. A small committee may be appointed to prepare a scheme to further that object." When the representatives of the people went up to the Hill Palace to present an address of congratulation to His Highness, Mr. Banerji, who was waiting in the portico to welcome the public, kindly called me aside and said that all my suggestions were generously accepted by His Highness and thanked me for making them in the proper time. A few relevant extracts from my diary will, perhaps, fit in here:

12-10-1912. Mr. F. S. Davies writes to me if I would serve on the Committee to examine candidates to be appointed as Malayalam Pandits in our State. I accepted to do so.

26-10-1912. I am appointed as an examiner for the Pandit's Test, also re-appointed as a member of the Text-Book Committee.

5-12-1912. Sent a scheme of studies for those who wish to appear for the Pandits' Examination.

25-12-1912. Presentation of the People's address to His Highness at the Hill Palace. Boons to the people worthy of the occasion. Before their announcement, I was glad to hear from the Diwan that my suggestions regarding them were given effect to. He also thanked me for the timely hint. Returned soon to Ernakulam with a few others to supervise illumination and procession.

26-12-1912. Presented copies of Karuppan's and my

wife's books to His Highness at the Krishna Vilas Palace. Presented Cherayi V. V. Sabha's address also from there. The Sabha representatives were introduced to His Highness by me. His Highness looked very much pleased.

28-12-1912. Mrs. Banerji visited us, and, in the course of the talk, complimented me on the timely hint about the boons. 'My husband', she said, 'is so grateful to you for it.'

His Highness in his reply to the People's address, formally made an announcement of the boons he conferred on his objects on that memorable occasion. Referring to this particular subject, His Highness was graciously pleased to say, "I propose to appoint a Committee of official and non-official gentlemen to submit a scheme for the development of Sanskrit learning and for the improvement of Malayalam Literature, and I intend granting a sum of half a lakh of rupees to constitute it as a fund for the fulfilment of these objects."

In response to this proposal, the Government by its order, Ref. on C. No. 1772/88 dated 31-1-1913, appointed a Committee consisting of Their Highnesses Kerala Varma, B. A., Appan Thampuran, M. R. Ry. Kodungallur Kochuni Thampuran Avergal and four others "to submit a report within three months as to the best course that may be adopted to give effect to a scheme for the improvement of Malayalam Literature." On 16-2-1913, the members met at the Krishna Vilas Palace, elected His Highness Kerala Varma to act as the President and me as the Secretary of the Committee. We informally discussed several points connected with the subject of the commission, and then resolved to invite written expressions of opinions on the same from competent ladies and gentlemen. Several scholars, including His Highness Vajya Koil Thampuran, Meera. A. R. Rajaraja Varma, Vallathol

Narayana Menon, M. Beshagiri Prabhu, K. P. Padmanabha Menon, Srimathi T. Ikkavu Amma, Srimathi T. C. Kalyani Amma, and others, and many well-known journals and newspapers responded to our call. Their answers were of immense assistance to the committee in formulating its scheme and framing its report. I was given a free hand in drafting the report. I took great pains over it. The recommendations of the committee will be found summarised in the closing para of the report, while the rest of it is taken up mainly with the explanations and reasons for these. All along, the Diwan was taking an interest in our work. On 6-4-1913, he wrote to me from Coonoor, "I am glad to learn you have finished the report on the question of the improvement of the Malayalam Literature . . . I hope to review our educational policy after its two years' working in June next, and if you have any views to communicate, I shall be glad to consider them."

Excepting two or three, all the rest of our recommendations were accepted by the Government. To work out the scheme, outlined in the report, the first committee was constituted by Diwan's order C. No. 1672-88, dated 24-7-1913. Two days before it, I was asked by the Diwan to suggest two names "for appointment of a permanent Malayalam Committee", and was told by him that, as commanded by His Highness, I would be one of the members.

I do not propose to sketch the history or the work of this Committee from 1913 to 1941. But as one who served it for a period longer than any other member, it would ill become me if I do not point out a few landmarks on its passage through these 28 years.

On September 7, of 1920, I resigned my membership of the committee. 'Shorn of all its powers', my diary notes, "the Malayalam Improvement Committee is made an appendage of the Director of Public

Instruction. Only the other day, the Diwan sent two Malayalam books to another for remarks as to their suitability for Sircar encouragement. So, I resigned my place on the committee."

When there were only three members and I acted as the Secretary of the Committee, we were working very harmoniously. But when the committee was enlarged, and an official was nominated by the Government as its Secretary, (vide G. O. dated 13-8-1920, R. O. C. No. 1519/95) troubles began to creep in into the amicable working of the body. The Secretary at times forgot that he was only a servant of the Committee and began to act as if he was mainly answerable to the Government. I informally suggested that a non-official member of the Committee should, in the interests of the dignity of the Committee, be made the Secretary. This only made matters worse, and thereafter, he began to behave towards me in a strange fashion. I never took any serious notice of his conduct. Once, when "a resolution unanimously passed at a meeting of the Committee, held on 16-4-1923, relating to the publication of the series of selections from Malayalam Poetry and Prose" was submitted to the Government for its approval on 15-6-1931, the Secretary to the Diwan thus wrote to me on the subject on 5-7-1923 (H. O. C. No. 4658/98): "I have the honour, by direction, to request that, as your views on the subject are not on record, you will be so good as to meet the Diwan and discuss the matter. If this is not however convenient, the remarks may kindly be sent to me. The enclosure may be returned". This expression of the consideration on the part of the Government opened the eyes of the Secretary and his confidant, who thus knew that it was no use to tease me any further.

Even when I was not on the Committee, references used to be made to me by the Government. To one alone I shall here advert to. For the social better-

ment of the Depressed Classes, Mr. Karuppan, as Assistant to the Protector of the Depressed Classes, wrote a booklet, called 'அச்சர-
 பூஷணம்', (Achara-
 bhushanam). When the Director of Public Instruction asked the sanction of the Government for printing a thousand copies of it for free distribution among the Depressed classes, the Government sent the book to me for my remarks. (Endorsement on G. No. 3504/05, L. & Mis. Department, dated 21-1-1930). The Director's recommendation was sanctioned with this proviso: (G. O. 27-5-1930, Dis. No. 3047/D/05). "2. Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon, to whom the booklet *Achara-bhushanam* was sent for remarks, has offered certain valuable suggestions for improving the work. Mr. Menon's suggestions are appreciated and the author will give effect to them."

The Committee had another set-back in 1934. Till that year, it worked directly under the Government. But, in that year, G. O., D. Dis. 17561/1109 of 14-8-1934 directed, the Committee "to submit its reports and budgets through the Director of Public Instruction." The Committee objected to this course as it was likely to curtail its liberty of action. The Government then informed the Secretary of the Committee (G.O., D. Dis. 5035/1110 dated 18-11-1934) "that the committee is still under the Government control, and that the intention of the order is only to enable the Director of Public Instruction to be in touch with the activities of the Committee". But this explanation did not satisfy the Committee's then President, His Highness Appan Thampuran. The Director then suggested the name of Mr. Ullur Parameswara Iyer as the President. This experiment did not work satisfactorily, as the office was at Trichur, the President at Trivandrum and the Secretary at Ernakulam. When, after his term, Mr. Parameswara Iyer retired, I was offered the place. To facilitate work, I requested the transfer of the office to

Ernakulam. This was done. But, for the efficiency of the office, I had to appoint a full-time clerk in the place of a part-time clerk of the Director's office. Somehow, it so happened, to my ill-luck, that I incurred the displeasure of this clerk and of the Director of Public Instruction. With these disabilities I had to shoulder the responsibilities of the President of the Committee. When obstacles began to increasingly appear in my way, and false and malicious criticisms appeared in a particular newspaper, I went to the Diwan, Sir Shammukham Chetty, and placed, without any reserve, all the facts before him. He sympathetically told me not to be worried over these but to push on with my work. Encouraged by these remarks, I set to work with a will. He also added then, "there is one thing that worries the Government. The establishment charges eat away more than half the annual interest of the endowment." I told him it was true, and that he might devise any means to obviate that defect. With his help it was possible for me—rather I should say, but for his help it would not have been possible for me—to publish *Chitraprasnam*, a book on certain *Common Diseases and the ways to avoid them*, and *Ancient Kerala Scripts*. The Madras Daily, *Hindu*, in noticing the last important work, makes these observations, in its issue of the 14th July 1940, which I gratefully appreciated: "The Committee, under the able presidency of Sahityakusalan T. K. Krishna Menon, has been able to bring out a number of useful publications. Valuable manuscripts which otherwise would not have seen the light of day, have been unearthed, edited and published by this committee. *Ancient Kerala Scripts* is by Dr. L. A. Ravi Varma, a recognised authority on the subject—Mr. Krishna Menon, the President, has contributed a learned introduction to the book, in the course of which he discusses the possible link between Brahmi and these Kerala scripts and also deals with the

evolution of some modern scripts."

To get over the other difficulty of minimising the establishment charges, I submitted that the question might be carefully gone into by a committee. This committee, I believe, recommended to the Government that it would be desirable to formulate a detailed plan showing the works for which the interest of the funds endowed for the development and improvement of the Malayalam language and literature can be devoted for the next five years and also the way in which these works can be executed. An "Ad Hoc Committee of scholars" appointed by the government to prepare this plan (order R. Dis. 9424/15, of 16-10-1941) has submitted its reports to the government. How far and how fruitfully its recommendations will work time alone will show. But the publications so far issued by the committee will ever remain as a monument of the labours of that body.

* * * *

Rama Varma Research Institute. Diwan Rao Bahadur P. Narayana Menon was pleased to send me a copy of the Proceedings about the Old inscriptions in the State. I at once wrote to him this letter.

Ernakulam,
8-8-1939.

Sir,

I thank you for a copy of the Proceedings which culminated in the order, dated 22-12-1923, R. O. C. No. 5684/97. I am glad to find that you still retain your interest in antiquarian researches. I pray that you may be pleased to translate it into action. The order by itself will not go a long way: at best, it may remain as a pious wish, at times partially fulfilled through fear. It will not save the situation; it will not produce the desired beneficial effect.

I take leave to request you to kindly start a systematic archaeological survey of the State. Every

village, every Desom, must be touched. The inscriptions should be faithfully copied, deciphered and edited. Whenever possible, inscriptions on stones, plates etc. and all available chronicles, should be collected and preserved. Also folklore and tradition of every place should be noted down, and festivities in temples, churches and other public places should be described along with their origin and import. Our aim should be to prepare village manuals like the District Manuals of British India.

I have also the honour to request you to be so good as to arrange for the collection, preservation and publication of ancient Sanskrit and Malayalam manuscripts which lie rotten and forgotten in many a family in our State. You will be doing a lasting service to the literature and sastra, and posterity will certainly bless you.

I am sending you with this a copy of the order of the Government of Madras, No. 55, (Home (Education) dated 19-1-1917, and a copy of the order of the Government of Travancore, R. O. C. No. 492 of 23 Leg. Ec. dated 9-1-1924.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient servant
(Sd.) T. K. Krishna Menon,

To that of mine, I got this reply from the Secretary to the Diwan.

Ernakulam,
22nd May 1924.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter, 8-8-1920, regarding archaeological inscriptions in the State, I am directed to enclose herewith a copy of the Diwan's letter, dated 1-4-1924, to the Agent to the Governor-General and of his reply thereto, and to request that you will be so good as to let me know whether there

is any one here who has taste in such matters, i. e., who can take impressions.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) P. Damodara Menon,
Secretary to the Diwan.

I suggested the name of Mr. K. Rama Pisharodi, M. A., and the Diwan accepted the suggestion. Subsequently, the connected file with a note he sent to me to prepare a plan of work for Mr. Pisharodi. To that, I sent the following reply:

Ernakulam,
Vrischigom 1110

My dear Sir,

Your letter, dated 12-11-24, I got on 15-11-24. I thank the Government for this reference. I have to make the following suggestions for its kind consideration.

1. The first matter to which Mr. K. Pisharodi is to address himself is the *copying of inscriptions and preservation of antiquities*. Movable antiquities of archaeological interest may be sent to the museum at Trichur. A complete descriptive list of all these has to be prepared by him after a thorough survey. Copies of such inscriptions as he could not decipher or explain must be sent to the Superintendent of Archaeology of Travancore and Madras. A copy of the order of the Government of Madras (No. 85 Home Education, dated 19-1-17) submitted to the Darbar by me, may be sent to him for guidance and necessary action.

2. Next, he is to direct his attention to the collection of *copper-plates and manuscripts*. If the owners will not part with the originals, their copies may be taken. Only the manuscripts of unpublished and valuable works and of ancient chronicles (കാലാനുക്രമം) need be secured. Copies of Malayalam works

can be prepared by the Pundit attached to the Malayalam Improvement Committee; those of Sanskrit ones by the Sanskrit School Pundits. A copy of the order of the Travancore Government (R. O. C. No. 422 of 23 / Leg. E., dated 9-1-'24) submitted by me to the Darbar, may be sent to him for his guidance. The inscriptions, copper-plates and MSS. should be faithfully copied, deciphered and edited with appropriate introductions and commentaries.

3. Thirdly, he has to collect, record, study and edit the fast-perishing relics of our ancient history and folk-lore. What I mean by Folk-lore can be seen from the explanation of the term as given in the "Scope of the Society" in the accompanying pamphlet which you will kindly return after taking a copy of its third page. This copy may be sent to Mr. R. Pisharody. For this every village, every desom has to be tapped. A comprehensive set of questions may be prepared and printed, and copies of this should be sent to school masters and school mistresses, every officer connected with the Revenue and Devassom departments, Panchayats and Co-operative Societies, and other educated individuals of every village with an appeal for investigation and reply. The questions should, among other subjects, refer to the meaning of the name of each desom and village, the origin of religious institutions, the festivals and their import, customs, ceremonies, manners, beliefs, stories, songs, sayings, riddles, sports, traditions, places and events of historical and antiquarian interest, so on and so on, peculiar to each locality. Once, a long while ago, we issued an appeal, a copy of which I send you with this.

Mr. V. K. Rama Menon had a printed copy of a set of questions prepared by the Folk-lore Society. Mr. Pisharody may get this from him, and prepare a set that will be suited to local conditions. I shall be glad to help Mr. Pisharody with my humble

suggestions if he will kindly send to me the questionnaire he prepares.

By this means we shall be able to re-vivify the ancient past; at any rate, it will be a great thing if the people can be made to take an interest in the *കോങ്ങപാടം* (Kongan-pata) of Chittur and the *കാലമയക്കൽ* (Kalam-mayakkal) of a village in Thalappilly; in the *കാട്ടന്നിരിക്കൽ* (Katannirikkal) of Kadavallur; and the Panditha Sabha of Kanayannur.

4. The Malayalam Improvement Committee may be directed to start a Quarterly Journal under its auspices in which to publish these manuscripts, inscriptions and folklore, and to invite criticism to elucidate doubtful matters, and co-operation for further research and collection work. Mr. R. Pisharody may be made a member of that Committee, and the Government may appoint a small sub-committee to edit it.

5. I fully trust that this new work will not interfere with the work he is now engaged in—the preparation of a descriptive catalogue of the MSS. in the Pishavaippu Library.

I return the file.

Yours sincerely,

(8d) T. K. Krishna Menon

After conducting the work with the help of a part-time office, for Mr. Rama Pisharody was then the Headmaster of the Sanscrit School, the Government found "that the services of a full timed officer are necessary to achieve adequate progress in this important work."

Mr. Paliath Aniyar Achan was here then after a creditable course at Santineketan, where he had worked under Professors Winternitz and Vidhyasekhara Bhattacharya, both of whom spoke nicely of him in their certificates. He had also, on my advice, undergone a course of research studies in the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute at Poona. So, I suggested

his name to Diwan Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer. Thus Mr. P. Aniyar Achan became the State Archaeologist. (Vide G. O. 10-12-1927, R. O. C. No. 776/1102). He was also made the Secretary of the Rama Varma Research Institute Committee. This was inaugurated by the G. O., dated 24-1-1925, R. O. C. No. 1734/1100, which, reading (1) G.O. No. C. 375/96, dated 10-9-1920 and (2) letter from M.B.Ry. T. K. Krishna Menon Esq., dated 26-4-1100, and (3) Farvadhikari's communication No.A. 643/1100 dated 19-1-1925, proceeded as follows: "It is now proposed to start an Oriental Library of books including Grandhas with special reference to the territories forming the Old Kerala Country. In order to draw up a scheme to carry out this idea as also for the management of the institution when it is started, a committee consisting of the following gentlemen will, for the present, be formed:—

The Hon. Superintendent of the Museum
M.R. Ry. T. K. Krishna Menon, Avl., B.A.,
" K. Rama Pisharodi, " M.A.,
" V. K. Rama Menon, " M.A.,
" Bar-at-Law.

2. The library in question will be called after His Highness the Maharaja "The Rajar Varma Research Institute", and will for the present be started in the Museum Buildings at Trichur, the books kept wherein forming the nucleus."

It further added that the Committee could get suitable books from the Palace and Huzar Libraries. The Committee was also to consider the desirability of transferring the Grandha Library at Trippunithura to the Institute.

A recurring annual expenditure not exceeding Rs. 200 was sanctioned for the upkeep of the Institute. On 4-4-1925, the Committee met at the Diwan's residence to frame a set of rules for the guidance of the Committee in its work. I had taken with me a

set of rules. That was passed, and the Government approved them by its order G. No. 4177/1101, dated 10-7-1927, and made Mr. P. Anjyan Achan, the Secretary of the Committee.

The committee has collected a decent number of valuable books and journals, useful for research work. It is publishing a Bulletin as well. I have been a member of the Committee from its very inception, and have edited the Bulletin for some years. It has also been my privilege to get for it free, while I was on my pilgrimage to shrines in Northern India, the Gaekwar's Oriental Series, (Oriental Institute, Baroda, 5-10-1936, No. 227). I have always taken a real, living interest in its work, and made others do the same.

Executive Committee. When I was the Secretary of the Cochin Legislative Council, I thought the members had an impression that I was, in my official capacity, a necessary adjunct to every committee. To disabuse their minds and to relieve me from that sort of work, I told the Diwan that my work as Secretary was heavy and exacting enough, and that I should be spared from the trouble of working on committees. He fully endorsed my view, and made it plain to the members that the Council Secretary would not ordinarily be able to serve on Committees. That pronouncement saved me from a lot of trouble and additional work. However, when the Electricity Bill was introduced by the Government, the Diwan said that I should be on the Committee. "You see it is an important Bill; and I must have one or two on the committee on whom I can rely to see the Bill free from any defect and made adaptable to our State". So, I had to work hard on that committee, though I was aware that the words of the Diwan were intended only to induce me not to raise any objection to my being included among the members of that committee.

But when my name was suggested to the Diwan as a member of the Excise Committee by Mr. V. B. Vythianatha Iyer, the Excise Commissioner, the Diwan said that he must get my consent first. Then he came to my house and told me that, in order to avoid troubling me, who was already overburdened with work, he tried to get Mr. C. Achyutha Menon. But, on considerations of health, he positively refused to assist him. Consequently, he said that I must join the committee and help him. The Diwan would not allow him, he added, to name me except with my permission. Thus, I had to yield to his request.

"In reference to the wishes of the non-official members of the Legislative Council" so ran the G.O. R. O. C. No. 35/1101. Revenue Department dated 8-3-1926, "who expressed a strong desire for the appointment of a Committee to examine the excise policy of the Government", it constituted a committee consisting of Messrs. V. K. Kochundi Menon, T. V. Kasturi Ranga Iyer, Maravil Krishna Menon, K. T. Mathew, M. K. Raman, V. B. Vythianatha Iyer and myself.

This membership gave me an opportunity to study the question, not only from a financial point of view, but also in its social and moral aspects. I carefully considered the systems of administration of the Travancore and Madras Governments. I read the literature connected with the liquor problem in Norway and the United States of America.

The members easily realised that, whatever might be the ideas and ideals which individuals entertained on the subject, it would be against the tenets of practical statesmanship to adopt an excise policy different from that of the surrounding countries. The ideal can be attained only by slow and safe steps. These formed the guiding principles with which we approached the question referred to us for our consideration and report. Before we drafted the

report, we carefully discussed all relevant points. Two did not sign the report, while the third signed it with a note of dissent on one or two points. To this note I was asked to write a reply, which was signed by all the four who signed the report. To explain our position, I shall quote a few sentences from this reply.

"Mr. M. K. Raman seems to speak not for himself alone, but for the two others (Messrs. K. T. Mathew and T. V. Kasturi Ranga Iyer) who have not signed the report. Neither of them has made him their spokesman.

"Mr. K. T. Mathew was out for a fight from the very beginning and not for harmonious co-operation. That will be evident from his letters and his interpellations in the Council. Neither the convenor nor the other members are in any way at fault for the absence of Rao Sahib Kasturi Ranga Iyer. If he thought or knew that he would not be able to take part in the deliberations of the Committee, he should have tendered his resignation to the Government. Not only did he not do this, but he made the convenor understand, both after the memorandum and the draft report were placed in his hands, that he had only a few trifling alterations to suggest, which he said he would do at the final meeting of the committee.

"As for Mr. Raman, never for once did he complain of want of time nor of facilities for preparation nor for an elaborate discussion. The only point for which he pressed was the necessity for effective supervision on the part of the preventive staff, and the penultimate sentence in paragraph 48 of the report was, more or less, put in at his instance. At the last meeting of the committee when the report was adopted, he said he had no changes to be made in it."

This conversation which took place after the publication of the report is suggestive, and so is given below:

Mr. M. K. Raman— All the pungent passages and the literary lines are from the pen of Mr. Krishna Menon. Mr. V. B. Vythianatha Iyer— Why do you say so? We are prepared to share the odium as well as the credit. The fact of the matter is, I supplied the skeleton for the report, and Mr. Krishna Menon supplied its flesh and blood.

Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon— If you look at my body, you can easily guess that I have of either not much to spare.

Mr. V. K. Kociannu Menon— No one of us has studied the question in its wide, general aspect so well as Mr. Krishna Menon.

Mr. C. Achyutha Menon— It is as good as a first class parliamentary report. There is no doubt about it.

Before I leave this chapter, I wish to add a few words on certain subjects of a miscellaneous character, and of my work on one or two committees more. In the survey of my work on committees, I regret it has not been possible for me to keep to any sequence of time. For this drawback, I can only apologise to my reader, and to draw on his indulgence which I trust he will kindly extend to me for the rest of the chapter as well. I write as I remember; and, after all, in matters like this, it is the work and not the chronology that counts, I suppose. Anyway, let me hasten to conclude this chapter which seems to lengthen as I proceed.

“For the better administration of important temples in the State, the Darbar, in 1918, for the first time appointed *Honorary Visitors* to make occasional visits to these temples and record in a book kept for the purpose their remarks on the management etc.” I was invited to be a visitor to the famous Siva Temple at Ernakulam. (Rev. Department P. R. 48/2/93, dated 29-7-1918), along with Mr. Kar. Achutha Menon and

the late Mr. K. Rajarama Rao. I accepted it with joy and alacrity. Barring the few years that I spent in Calicut and in Madras, I have practically spent all my days in Ernakulam. And, when I am in Ernakulam, it is my invariably rule to go and worship in that temple. Even if I happen to be under any birth or death pollution, I go round and worship from its outside beside the western gate.

The abdicated Ruler once promulgated an order that females with blouses and males with cropped hair should not enter the temples in the State. This order created quite a stir and not a little of adverse comment. I had cropped my hair, not to honour the prevailing fashion among young men, but out of sheer necessity. I had much work in Cochin in those days. The court-house there, small, and not well-ventilated, would be also always crowded, so that my head, burdened with turban, used to suffer severe pain towards evenings. On those days, before my evening baths, I had to lie down with some curative medicine on the forehead. One day, His Highness asked Pandit Kunjan Warriar, "How does Kunhi Krishnan manage to worship now?" The pundit knew how I did and also why I had cropped my hair. So, briefly, he explained my position to His Highness who, without any tenderness, at once remarked, "For that he must consult a physician and not crop his hair".

I took a fervent interest in all that concerned this temple. I had the uncommon happiness of editing a rare and valuable chronicle of the origin of this temple. I actively co-operated in collecting funds for erecting a golden flag-staff in the temple. For introducing *Chakkar-Kuthu*, I worked to submit a memorial to His Highness.

Thus it was that I felt glad in being a visitor. But I did not enter any remarks in the book kept for that purpose; and when questioned by His Highness

as to why I alone did not make any remarks, I submitted that I get things righted by a personal talk or remonstrance. Whereas, if I wrote any adverse remark, and that was not heeded by the Devaswom Department, the temple employees might naturally not heed my advice. "In one way, you are right." His Highness said with a smile. When Mr. P. Damodara Menon and Mr. T. V. Ramalinga Iyer chanced to be at the head of the Devaswom Department, they earnestly asked me, because they knew I was really religiously minded, to send up suggestions for the improvement of the temples so as to make them more beneficial to the public.

Here is a letter from Mr. Damodara Menon:

Camp Triprayar,
27-10-01.

I owe you an apology for not acknowledging receipt of your very kind letter of the 8th instant I shall certainly do my best to improve matters.

"I note the Pazhavannur Bhagavathi temple you refer to is the one in the Cochin Palace and not the temple at Pazhavannur. Yes, it requires early attention, and I shall be glad to go with you to the temple when I go to Ernakulam next month. I knew, of course, that I can count upon your support and advice. Your hospitality is well-known and I shall not fail to take advantage of it. You must be very busy with the Legislative Council work — a very thankless task."

With one from Mr. Ramalinga Iyer I shall close this subject. Throughout the narration of the events of this humble life, it has always been a case of 'touch and go'; for it is neither possible nor practicable to touch every matter or to go into details.

"Trichur, 15-8-1106. I have perused with pleasure your note containing suggestions for imparting religious instruction and for affording facilities for

studies in religion and morals I shall see that a beginning is made in this direction before long." My letter, dated 20-2-1931, to the Devaswom Commissioner contained, if I remember right, suggestions for the delivery of religious lectures, starting libraries (of religious works) attached to important temples, reading of Puranams, and provision for imparting instruction, for those who are to officiate as priests, in the theory and practice of the rituals according to the Agama Sastras.

Did I say I shall close with this letter? I did. But just pause for a moment to hear of another attempt of mine to spread the cause of our religion. This reply, dated 23-7-1933, from the late Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Iyer, when he was officiating as Diwan, refers to it.

"The idea to set apart a portion of the Devaswom funds for the reading of Puranam and the delivery of religious lectures by competent persons is indeed very good I shall find out if anything can be done for our Ernakulam Temple."

The following communication to me from the Government will speak for itself.
R.O.C. No. 2908/96.

Office of the Diwan of Cochin,
Local and Legislative Department,
Dated 1st September 1921.

From

M.R.Ry. P. Damodaran Menon Avergal, B.A.,
Secretary to the Diwan.

To

M.R.Ry. T. E. Krishna Menon, Avl.,
District Court Vakil, Ernakulam.

Sir,

I have the honour, by direction, to inform you that a petition was received by the Government in

last January from the Ezhuva inhabitants of Irinja-lakuda requesting sanction for the erection of an Ezhuva temple in Sy.No. 987/1 & 3 of Manavalassery Village, Mukundapuram Taluk. The Koodalmanickom Devaswom authorities and the Christians of the locality objected to the grant of the petitioners' request. The Diwan inspected the site of the proposed Ezhuva temple and heard all the three parties to the dispute viz., the Ezhuvans, the Christians and the Koodalmanickom Devaswom authorities. Government desire that the dispute should be amicably settled, and that an arrangement to which all three parties agree, and under which the very legitimate desire of the Ezhuvans for a common place of worship can be satisfied without giving offence or causing substantial inconvenience to Hindu or Christian possessions should be arrived at, if possible. To effect such an arrangement, a Committee composed of Mr. P. Govindan Nair, Sub-Magistrate, as President, and Messrs. Thathampillil Narayana Menon, V.R.M. Chohan and Thattil Rappay as members was appointed. The Committee has not till now been able to arrive at any amicable settlement, and has approached the Government requesting the appointment of some more members to the Committee for a better and more impartial consideration of the question.

Under these circumstances, I have the honour, by direction, to request you to be so good as to inform me at your early convenience whether you have any objection to be a member of this Committee.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient servant,
(Sd.) P. Damodara Menon,
Secretary to the Diwan.

The newly co-opted members were Mr. K. Kochu Govinda Marar and myself. Before I went to the spot, I studied the file and heard the view-points of

the contending parties. To my great relief, H. H. Thachudaya Kaymal gave me a free hand in the matter. He said, "I am glad you are in it. I know you will do the right thing". The objections against the location of the temple at a particular spot I found, were more sentimental and imaginary than real. So, on the first occasion, to create a congenial atmosphere, I spoke with some warmth to the representatives of the parties on the harmony that should exist among different communities if we wanted our country to prosper and also of the helping hand the advanced people should give to those struggling behind. After that, we set to work; and the second time we went to the spot only to peg the spot in the light of the village records. "That is a triumph, Mr. Krishna Menon", the Diwan complimented me on the success of the mission. This took place during the time of Sir Vijayaraghava Chari.

The Diwan asked me, early in 1922 to go out on a somewhat delicate mission. H. H. the late Rama Varma, Kochannai Thampuran, the eldest brother of H. H. the late Appan Thampuran, was a reputed physician for the treatment of poison cases. One day, as if on the impulse of the moment, he suddenly notified that he would no more treat patients from that day. That was a serious matter for the public. One could not entirely put the blame on the Prince, because he was forced to take this step on a discourteous answer, so H. H. told me when I went up to him, from the Superintendent of Police, when the latter was requested to see to the early removal from the palace of a man who, bitten by a cobra, died during the course of the treatment. The Diwan was petitioned by several from Trichur, near which the Prince lived, and also by others to save the public from this difficult situation. I was requested by the Diwan, who knew I was on very friendly terms with His Highness, to go and see what

I could do in the matter and to send in a formal report. I told the Diwan to kindly make Mr. Doraswamy Iyer also to go with me. Though my friend agreed with the Diwan that he would join me, yet, at the last moment, he left me alone to do the work. Here is his letter.

Saraswathi Vilas,
Ernakulam,
12-3-1922.

My dear Friend,

..... I think it will be inconvenient for the Prince to meet us in the morning. The best time will be 4 P. M. Will it not be enough if you return to Ernakulam to-morrow morning? If you want to return today, the best thing will be to go to the Prince at 2 P. M. But you will kindly excuse me as I think it will not be wise for me to expose myself considering my state of health. I am suffering from a severe headache. When and where can I meet you?

Yours very affectionately,
Sd. T. A. Doraswamy Iyer.

I went and met the Prince at about 9 A. M. He was busy with the arrangements for a festival that was being celebrated that day. The gist of the talk we had, shorn of all its non-essentials, I shall give, as far as possible, in our own words.

സ്വദേശീയ ചിന്താസമ്മേളനം— ആദ്യം രാജാവിന്റെ വരവിന്നു് ഏതൊരു ചടങ്ങുകളാണെന്നു് ഞാൻ ചോദിച്ചപ്പോൾ—

ഞാൻ— രാജാവിന്റെ വേഷക്കളയാടലെന്നു് ചോദിക്കുകയാണെന്നു് അദ്ദേഹം പറഞ്ഞു. അദ്ദേഹം പറഞ്ഞു കേൾക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. അദ്ദേഹം പറഞ്ഞു കേൾക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. (H. H.— What brought you here, Anivan Menon? I was under the impression that you had forgotten me. Not to see the Vela (festival) you have come. That is certain.)

അന്തർ- അടിയന്തര ഉന്നതതലത്തിൽ കൗൺസിൽ മതി. അതാദ്യം
 എൻ്റെ അഭിപ്രായം എഴുതാൻ പറയുകയല്ലേ?

(H. H. - I know I am eating the salt of my countrymen. I also know that, to digest it properly, I must be doing some service to them. Do you not know that, invariably, people get bitten by poisonous creatures at night? So, I have to abandon sleep. If through my misfortune or that of the patient, he dies; what do you say if I have to remain till 4 p.m., next afternoon, for the removal of the dead body and for my breakfast. It has happened; so I say so to you. That too I can endure. But I cannot put up with the insolent conduct of a Police Officer.)

I - Pity! Your Highness. People had always regarded you as a brave Prince. Are the innocent people of the State to be punished for the impudence of a Police Officer? You ought to go for that to Kanattukaray and express in mild terms the displeasure over this incident to your uncle. It is that Highness who raised the officer to this position.

H. H. - There is something in what you say (he said smilingly). What is it that you want me to do?

I - Let the Sirkar build a structure near the palace; and let it appoint one or two persons to attend on the patients. Then, on account of the misdeeds of the Police, your meals will not be interfered with. Are you agreeable to this? I pray Your Highness must graciously consent to this course. So I will report.

H. H. - Report? Clever man! You have come as the Diwan's agent, I see. Had I known it before, my behaviour would not have been this.

I - I want to see only this day's aspect. Please do not forget to pay an early visit to Kanattukara.)

That produced a hearty laugh from His Highness. Then, we talked for some time on other subjects. I left by the next train, and sent in a formal report to the Diwan. When I met him next, he complimented me by saying, "I feared the Prince would not relent."

I am glad you scored a signal victory." He fully agreed with my scheme, and submitted his proposals for the sanction of His Highness the Maharaja. But, for some mysterious reason, they never emerged from the office of the Sarvadhikariakar. However, the Prince began to help his patients.

Another errand on which I was sent, but this time, by Diwan Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, was to inspect the *mural paintings* and send in my remarks "on an apparent act of vandalism, which was being perpetrated in the Vadakkumnathan temple at Trichur," and about which Mr. C. W. E. Cotton had written to him. "There are some old frescoes there" he wrote "which ought to be preserved; but the authorities are substituting new ones which are artistically much inferior. Can anything be done to stop them? Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon has full particulars I believe from the gentleman who wrote to me, as President of the Kerala Society, on the matter." That was so. For, I did get one letter from the self same person, a letter in which he had hinted that the work was started on the recommendation of an officer more to patronise a painter than to beautify the temple, and another from Mr. Cotton himself in which he had taken me to task for silently sitting over the defacement of a great work of art. Mr. Cotton's letter I at once sent to the Diwan. The office of the Diwan sent me an official memorandum (No. P. 540 03 L & Mis. dated 8-11-1928) with the office file on the subject for favour of remarks. I took objection to the form of the communication, and the Diwan assured me that he had reprimanded his office for that act of discourtesy, and seconded his remark with the words, "You see, some of the officers, though long in service, have yet to learn how to behave politely." In passing, I have to state that some, in direct descent from those stalwarts still thrive, who think that, to affront superior sirs and that to certain people, specially

non-officials, is a mark of firm efficiency. But that is no concern of mine. I went to Trichur, and went to worship, after my bath, in the Vadakkumnathan temple. After that was over, I carefully inspected the old and the new sets of paintings. Then I called the painter whom I found working there and asked him to stop his work at once, and showed him my order. To my dismay I found the frescoes on two of the three structures had already suffered at his hands. I requested him not to start work on the central structure, the one untouched by him, before he got orders from the Government. He came out with me; we had a long talk on the old and new sets of mural paintings, how to renovate the old set, and how to preserve both sets from the ravages of time. On some points I found his knowledge either elementary or defective. So, before I submitted my report, which I wanted to be full, I had to consult others and study one or two books. I am glad to say that my suggestions were accepted by the Government. I thanked Mr. Cotton for his timely warning.

* * * *

One day, while on a visit to Diwan Sir Shammugham Chetty, he chanced to say that he had no idea of the contents of the *Hydrabad Central Records Office*, that he had heard from one or two who were in contact with them that the records lay in a disarranged condition. It could not be so bad as that, I told him. For I had heard from the late Mr. M. Saakara Menon and the Special Harbour officer, Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, that during the days of Diwan Shankunni Menon, they found some indexing done and some arrangement followed. I said I would be glad to assist him in putting the Records Room in order, if he could allow me to seek the help of Messrs. L. V. Ramaswami Iyer, K. Rama Pisharoti and V. K. Raghunadana Menon. He thanked me for the offer; but, as Messrs. V. K. Bhaskara Menon and

S. S. Koder had already taken his permission to work there, they would be, he said, helpful to me. I could not bring myself to believe this; for, Mr. Koder lived in Cochin and had already begun to assist his father in his trade, while Mr. Bhaskara Menon, from the very nature of his profession, could only put in any work, by fits and starts. My apprehensions proved true, and my request had to be granted by the Government, when it got a letter from the Resident of the Madras States, who forwarded a Resolution of the Historical Records Commission, which recommended the speeding up the calendaring of records by taking the help of the local University teachers and other competent scholars. (G.O. Pub. & Pol. Department P-324692/14 dated 6-10-1939). After getting down the plans of work adopted in Madras and Baroda, I prepared a note on the classification we proposed to follow, got it approved by the other two members and submitted to the Government, which approved the scheme by its Order (P3-24692) F.A. dated 11-03-1939). On this basis we set to work. The memorandum and the reports I have submitted while engaged in this work will clearly show the hard work I did and its obvious nature. Over and above this classification and indexing, I was asked to do another work.

On 3-11-1939, I got this letter of the Secretary to the Government, No. P3-4388/15, dated 31-10-1939.

Ernakulam,

31st October 1939.

Sir,

History of Sakthan Thampuran—Materials for.

"I have the honour to inform you that His Highness is very much interested in the preparation of an accurate and detailed life history of the famous Sakthan Thampuran of Cochin. The necessary materials for this have to be gathered from the Records in the Central Records Office. As the period of rule of Sakthan Thampuran relates to the years 900-1000

M. E., the materials are to be gathered from the records relating to this period. I request you, therefore, to keep separately any records of this period that you may come across while examining the records, and whenever you come across such records the fact may kindly be intimated to me."

In this connection, I had to read through MSS. books, cadjan-leaf *granthas*, and about 3000 sheets of paper and take notes which were sent to Mr. P. Rama Menon who prepared the life. He has generously complimented me in his introduction to that work. As the origin of this biography is due to me, I worked for collecting materials for it with special interest.

Another reference for my views was in connection with the question of the reorganisation of the Indian Historical Records Commission. In the reply that I wrote to the Government, on 25-1-1941, these closing paragraphs are, I think, important.

"It will, for obvious reasons, be desirable for this State to co-operate with the Indian Government in widening the useful activities of the Indian Historical Records Commission. But as each State will have to bear the travelling expenses of its nominees, our State may limit its nominee to one who may be asked to represent it on the Commission as well as on the Committee. A subordinate officer may also be deputed to New Delhi to get himself trained in "the scientific methods of the storage, preservation and repairs of records", if deemed needed.

"It will also be necessary in the meanwhile to speed up the indexing and classifying of all public records in the State, and noting what is confidential, and what is open to *bona fide* scholars engaged in historical research, and also to institute a survey of valuable records in the custody of families and of private individuals in the State."

Once His Highness the late Maharaja, the Dharmika Chakravarthi, graciously asked me as to the nature

of the work I was doing in the Fluxar Office. I explained to him.

മി. നല്ല കാര്യമാണല്ലോ. ചിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തേണ്ടത്.
എന്താ ചെയ്യാൻ വേണ്ടത്?

(H. H.— That is hard work and there is plenty of it too. What pay do you get?)

I remained silent.

മി.— എന്താ പറയാത്തത്?

(H. H.— Why don't you say?)

ഞാൻ—ചായ്മില്ല. മി.നല്ലപ്പു 200 രൂപയുടെ ഒരു അമിതമായി
ചെയ്യണമെന്നാണ്.

(I. I think it is your Highness' order, and so do my duty.)

മി.— കല്പനയുണ്ടാകട്ടെ. പക്ഷെ; പട്ടം പറ്റിക്കൊണ്ട്, നല്ല
ചെയ്യട്ടെ.

(H.H.— Order is mine. But this is hard. No doubt about it.

I did not even then pray for any remuneration, as I worked for the welfare of the State also. I further thought that it would be demeaning myself to ask for any payment.

But, when forgetting all this, the Government wrote to me No. P4-24692/41, dated 10-7-1941, to state when I expected to finish the work undertaken, I had to reply the Secretary to the Government in this manner:—

"I do not remember to have undertaken any particular piece of work, much less to finish it within any specified time. On the other hand, the late Diwan wanted me to see what all records are housed in the Central Records Office, to classify them, if practicable, and, later on, to prepare an exhaustive list of them. At any rate, that is how I understood him when we had a personal talk on the subject. Along with this, my colleagues and myself wanted to do, on our own account, some research work relating to the early history of Cochin. These the Government will be

pleased to realise are not easy jobs and no time limit can be placed on them".

For myself I have not asked for anything to the Rulers or to the Diwans. The claims of certain deserving people for posts and titles it was possible for me to place before them. My representations were so proper and opportune that the rewards were not withheld in any instance. Even for the gift of Veerasringhalas to Messrs. Machur Sankara Menon, Rao Sahib P. K. Verghese, Sub-Inspector C. Krishna Menon and Brother Leo, I had something to do. The first three had it for services on certain important occasions, while the last got it for his artistic merits. I was asked to speak about Br. Leo at a party given to him on 3-1-1933 before he left Ernakulam to Kottayam. We two were friends, and I knew his talents and appreciated them. Among these only, perhaps, Mr. Krishna Menon came to know, I wonder how, that I had to do something for the recognition of his services, and so, on 18-1-1935, he came and thanked me for the gift. I only told him that he must be grateful to His Highness and not to me.

Visha Vaidya Salas. By order D. Dis. 41475/1108, dated 16-9-1933, I was appointed as an honorary visitor to the *Visha Vaidya Shalasam* at Perunninamkulam, along with Mr. P. Krishna Menon, B. A. The place is away from Ernakulam where we both lived, so we could do but little, if not practically nothing, towards the object the government had in view in the constitution of such Visitors' Boards as this. But, in connection with the General Hospital at Ernakulam, for a seat on the Visitors' Board I was entertained on 8-11-1938, I have been able to do some useful work. Along with my friends, Mr. P. C. Varkey and S. Rengaswamy Iyer, who were also on the Board, we used to make visits to the Hospital. On days when the

Board met, others also would join us. We made certain necessary suggestions connected with the dietary of the patients, the condition of the dispensing room, absence of water-taps in the Radium department and of sufficient accommodation in the Nurses' quarters. On 18-3-1939, the Chief Medical Officer wanted me to frame a set of rules to regulate visits of the friends and relatives of patients. With the help of Dr. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, who was then the Principal of the Medical College and Director of the Maternity Hospital in Madras, I was able to assist the C. M. O. When my friend, Dr. A. K. Menon, became the Civil Surgeon at Ernakulam, he began to take more than a formal and official interest in the working of the Board. He took the members round in the hospital, discussed with them the nature of their suggestions and in every way assumed an attitude other than a patronising one.

Radio Programs. Early in 1936, I got a note from the Chief Engineer, Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon, to know if I could help him to fix up programs for the Radio, set up in the Irwin Park at Ernakulam. I said I would certainly assist him, and suggested a few hints in that connection.

I made special reference to the following items:

1. Boat songs
2. Folk songs
3. Thullal Pattukal
4. Kathakali Padangal
5. Bhasha Natakams
6. Talks on the lives of great Rulers, Ministers, Agents to the Governor Generals of Cochin, and also world heroes and heroines.

My letter resulted in this letter from him.

Trichur,

January 24, 1936.

You must surely have been aware that we are giving some musical programmes in the Irwin Park by means of a sound amplifying equipment. It has occurred to me that the public may appreciate some variety in the programme involving some of our typical and important Folk songs.

I am thinking of requesting the following people including yourself to go into this question.

1. Prince Kerala Varma

2. Mr. K. P. Karuppan

& 3. Mr. P. C. Varkey.

Probably it would be easier to work as a Committee with Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon as convener and draw up programmes suggesting the names of men who could sing or talk on the subject. I think one subject a fortnight would be sufficient and we might possibly select this on the first and third Monday of every English month.

Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon has kindly consented to help me in this matter, and if you also be so kind, please let me know. You may also get in touch with Mr. Krishna Menon on the subject.

Thanking you

Yours sincerely,

Soon after the receipt of this communication, the Committee met and submitted some proposals, which in the letter, dated 10-2-1936, from the Chief Engineer to me, he said were approved by the Govt. But that was the last we heard on the matter. Strange!

Subsequently, I had this letter from the Station Director at Madras of the All-India Radio, Govt. of India, which I regretfully had to decline as I could not find time to devote to the work.

All India Radio
18th December 1941

Sahityakusalan T. K. Krishna Menon,
"Kumaralyam",
Ernakulam.

Dear Sir,

You may be aware that for sometime past we have been broadcasting programmes in Malayalam. I wonder whether I may trouble you to write short plays, stories and songs in Malayalam for inclusion in our programmes. An early reply will be greatly appreciated.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

(Sd). For Station Director.

Rural Library Committee. Of two more Committees I have to write before I proceed to another subject. I am not ashamed to admit that I am an enthusiast in the matter of village reconstruction — one may even call me a faddist or visionary there. I have studied a good deal of literature on the subject. I am emphatically of opinion that no country can prosper unless its villages are contented and happy. In a compact country like Cochin, with an intelligent rural population, rural development will not be a difficult proposition. Soon after Dr. A. R. Menon became the minister, we had a talk about this topic. I even suggested to him that it would not be a bad idea to invite the Heads of certain departments for a free discussion on the ways and means of improving the condition of our villages, and request some competent gentleman to write a small book on the basis of their well considered opinions and those of Mr. Brayne, a great authority on the subject. A book like that I told him would serve as a plan of work for him as the Minister for Rural Development. I regret that, though he fully appreciated my idea, he did not carry

it out. However, some time after, he came to me with a request that I should help him in organising rural libraries in the State. "Many tell me", so he said, "that if I can induce you to undertake the work, it will be systematically carried out." "I do not know that"; I remarked, "but I can see hurdless on my way — red-tapism being the most nasty one to be negotiated." He assured me that he would make the path smooth for me, and that my recommendations would be implicitly carried out. "If you be the President of the Committee, I shall gladly be a member of it." He agreed to that proposal, and the following notification, dated 29-6-1939, of the Ministry was published in the Gazette: "Government are pleased to constitute a Committee consisting of Messrs. T. K. Krishnan Menon, B.A., K. Ayyappan, B.A., M.L.C., M. K. Devassy, B.A., B.L., M.L.C., and Prof. P. Sankaran Nambiyar, M.A. (Hons.) to advise the Hon'ble Minister with regard to the location and management of Rural Libraries and the selection of books." Shortly after, Dr. A. R. Menon told me that the Diwan objected to his being the President of a Committee under him and requested me to take up that place, which I had to do towards the close of 1939. To fill up the two vacancies caused by the resignation of Dr. A. R. Menon and Mr. K. Ayyappan from the committee, Mrs. A. N. Menon, M.L.C., and Mr. P. C. Varkey were nominated to the Committee. The Rules the Committee framed for the working of the Rural Library Committee and of the Rural Libraries were approved by the Government. We started our work in earnest. In spite of the difficulties we had to contend with, which were neither small nor few, we forged a head, as all of us realised our responsibility, and the benefits that would accrue to the country by the sympathetic and systematic working of this library movement. By the end of 1941, the committee was able to start under its control more than

140 libraries. Daily my work began to increase. On the two occasions I took leave for a month or two, Mr. P. C. Varkey, who was acting for me, began to trouble me to return even before the expiry of my leave. Both he and Prof. P. S. Nambiyar excused themselves from accepting the place when I was forced to resign my office on 11-11-1941. "From almost the start of the Rural Library Committee," so ran my letter of resignation, "I have been shouldering the increasing and somewhat onerous and taxing burden of the President of that Committee. I have now my own reasons for requesting the Government to relieve me from that." Mrs. Thankamma N. Menon had to be appointed in my stead. The Government thus observed in its order, dated 1-12-1941 D-4 7149/17: "2. Mr. Krishna Menon has rendered great services to the Committee and by the joint effort of himself and the Committee the system of Rural Libraries has been placed on a proper basis. Government are pleased to thank Mr. Krishna Menon for his great services and also to note that he is willing to lend his services to the Rural Library as a member of the Committee."

* * * * *

Temple History Committee. Mr. P. Ramm Menon, B.A., B.L., though a busy lawyer, never failed to devote a part of his time to the cause of Malayalam Literature. When he became the Sarvadhikariakar, Indrasedi him not to give up his hobby or second love, but to continue to cultivate it with his accustomed fervour. He wrote and published the life of Sakthan Thampuran while he was holding that high office. But, before he began his work on that, I suggested to him the idea of writing and editing decent monographs on the famous temples in this State. His Highness, a great saintly person, easily and graciously approved our idea. It was thus easy to make the Devaswom Commissioner, Rao Sahib M. Krishna

Menon, to take up this question. He, Mr. Rama Menon and myself talked over the subject and formulated our conclusions and outlined the plan of action. Mr. P. Ramachandra Menon was appointed to collect materials and prepare the drafts of the chronicles, and a Committee was constituted to revise and edit them. My friends suggested my name as the President and Convener of the Committee. I told them that I owned no clerical staff and other facilities besides that, and that it would speed the publication if Sarvadhikariakkar is made the President. When all these preliminaries were settled, Mr. Krishna Menon submitted his scheme to the Government which it sanctioned by order, D-Dis. 21182/15 dated 19th June 1940. "The members of the Committee", wrote the Commissioner to the Government, "must be persons who take some real interest in publications like this with some natural aptitude for research work. I have the honour to request therefore that the following gentlemen may be appointed to serve on the Committee:

Messrs. 1. P. Rama Menon, Sarvadhikariakkar,

President

2. T. K. Krishna Menon,

3. P. Sankaran Nambiyar,

4. K. Rama Pisharody, and

5. V. K. Raghunandam Menon."

When Mr. Rama Menon found his official work too much to allow him to cope with the work of the President of this Committee, he had to resign his place. It was again privately offered to me; but I suggested the name of Prof. P. S. Nambiyar. When he found his name so notified, he declined to accept this honorary post, and so I was forced to take it up. "G. O. D-Dis. 1610/17, of 15-12-1941. The appointment of Prof. P. S. Nambiar as President of the Temple History Committee, ordered in the Government proceedings read above, is hereby cancelled, and Mr. T. K.

Krishna Menon is appointed as the President in his place." So I had to pilot the work of the Committee to a peaceful anchorage.

* * * *

XI. MY DAYS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The days of Sir P. Vipparaghava Chari as the Diwan of this State were fast expiring. It was then that Rao Bahadur P. Narayana Menon, who was then about to retire from the British Service, came to Cochin on leave. One morning, about 10 A. M., to give the date, it was on 6-6-1921, he kindly came to see me; and, soon after he took his seat, he abruptly told me to apply for the post of the Secretary to the Legislative Council, which was yet to be constituted by H.H. the Maharaja. That was a few months before the time when, as desired by the Diwan, Mr. Doraswami Iyer and myself critically read with him the Council Regulation and Rules which were to be submitted to the Ruler for his gracious sanction. When Mr. Narayana Menon said so, I looked at him with a blank amazement. "Why do you stare at me?" he asked. "Easily said," I answered. "For the Diwan treats me as a friend. I can now freely talk to him on things that will benefit the State. How small will I look in his eyes when, after an application for an office, I go to him?" "It is His Highness' command," he said. "That entirely changes the aspect. Please help like to write out the application." Having replied that, I wrote out a draft to his dictation, fairied it, and sent it at once to the Diwan. When next I met him, I did not conceal from him the genesis of the application. He then remarked, "Even without it, it would have gone to you."

When Mr. Narayana Menon became the Diwan, he, however, tried his level best to give the place of

the Council Secretary to another gentleman. To achieve his object, he tried to shunt me on to Trichur as the Curator of the Museum, with a tempting honorarium. "What about my chances at the Bar there?" I asked him. Failed there, he tried to create a bad atmosphere in the Hill Palace against me by giving out—to put it most charitably; I shall say there was no basis whatever for this his statement—that I was spreading a scandal that a close relative of the Consort was a horrible drunkard. No one in the Palace believed that, because both His Highness and the Consort knew full well that I would be the last to create or to circulate a bad report against any one. As a last resort, when he submitted his proposal for my appointment, he reduced the salary by half the amount, so that I might refuse the office. But His Highness, after sanctioning the proposal as a Constitutional Ruler, sent word to me as a noble-hearted Patron, through Mr. Thathampillil Narayana Menon, that it would greatly gratify him if I accepted the place even with its reduced pay. His Highness' idea was to give me at least Rs. 300 and put me in charge of the educational department as well of the Buzur Office. Poor Thathampillil came to me at about 9 at night, and detailed to me all what took place in this connection. For, he knew, I was a bit obstinate and did not much care for any official position. I at once told him, to be respectfully conveyed to His Highness, that, if His Highness so desired, I was prepared to serve him even without any pay. But I would stick to two conditions: I must be permitted to follow my profession and I should be a member of the Council. Diwan Mr. Narayana Menon had to yield to these terms of mine.

When I went to pay my respects to His Highness, he was on his bed with a light cold. The talented Consort complimented me by herself taking me to His Highness.

His Highness: സാദാ അതാവി.

(H. H.— I feel very glad.)

Consort: നാമിന്നു നമുക്കു നന്ദാവി വാക്കു, കൃഷ്ണനെ വരി
അവനിൽത്തന്നെ അനുമാകാം.

(Consort:— It is good for the country and to us. But, this will be a handicap to Krishna Menon in his life as a lawyer.)

His Highness: ഒരു മാതിരി സമ്പാദ്യം ആയല്ലോ?

(H. H.— You have made a fortune?)

Myself: (അടുത്തു) ഒരു ദിവസം കരിശാലിക്കു് കഷ്ടിച്ചുണ്ടാകും.

(Myself:— For a meal a day I may have.)

His Highness: അതൊക്കെ നിശ്ചയിക്കാം.

(H. H.— It can all be favourably arranged.)

Then the talk was diverted to other matters; and I took leave after some time.

When my appointment was gazetted, I was glad to get encouraging letters from several quarters, a few specimens of which I take leave to transcribe here.

"The news of the appointment of Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon as the Secretary to the Legislative Council of the State will be joyfully welcomed by all classes of His Highness's subjects. We do not believe there is any one in the State who is better qualified to occupy the post than Mr. Menon. For the last 20 or 25 years, he has been taking an active part in all public matters and to several non-official committees he has acted as Secretary and done much memorable work already in that capacity. He is a man of mature wisdom and ripe experience, gifted with business talents of a high order, and an infinite capacity for painstaking and perseverance. As such, we are sure that the Government's choice of Secretary has fallen on the right individual, and we heartily congratulate the Government and Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon."

Malabar Herald.

"കഷ്ടിച്ചുവെന്നു വിവക്ഷിക്കുന്നതിനുള്ളതിന്നു സാധിച്ചുകൊടുക്കൽ പ്രതിഫലം. കൃഷ്ണമേനോൻ അധികപ്പെട്ട വിഷയിൽനിന്നുതന്നെ വരിക. മിസ്റ്റർ കൃഷ്ണമേനോൻ ഒരു ഹാൻ അഡ്വക്കേറ്റായും കാലം

കൊട്ട ഒരു നല്ല വക്കീൽ എന്ന വിഖ്യാതം, വിശിഷ്ട, ഒരു നല്ല സാഹിത്യകാരൻ എന്ന വിഖ്യാതം സൂചനയിൽ സന്തോഷിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള ഒരു കാര്യമാണ്. കൊച്ചി വിജ്ഞാപനങ്ങൾ ആയിരക്കണക്കിന് കരണ ഉദ്യോഗ ഒരുത്തിമാപകരനായതിന്റെ അനുഭവനാൽ അദ്ദേഹം അറിവ്. കാര്യങ്ങൾക്കുവേണ്ടിയും പൊതുജനങ്ങളെ സംബന്ധിച്ച കൊച്ചി സന്ധാനത്തിൽ ഉണ്ടായ ട്ടുള്ള കൃതികൾ വളർച്ചയ്ക്കുകയും ഉദ്യോഗത്തിന് ഒരു പ്രധാന വകയായി കണിയിക്കുന്നു. അദ്ദേഹം എല്ലാകാര്യം സമർത്ഥനായി കിട്ടി കേരളത്തിൽ ഈ വിഷയത്തിൽ സന്തോഷിക്കാത്തവരായി അധികാരവാദികൾക്ക് വിശേഷമെന്നു തോന്നുന്നില്ല."

സത്യവാദം.

(We understand that Sahithyakusalan T. K. Krishna Menon has been appointed as the Secretary to the Cochin Leg. Council. For the past quarter of a century, Mr. Krishna Menon has been respected as one who has carried a name as a good lawyer and, especially, as a good literary man. We know that he had been an effective instrument for the advent of the Cochin Leg. Council. For a long time, in all those matters connected with the welfare of the people of Cochin, he had taken an important part. There will be very few who will not feel glad over the appointment of such a person as Mr. Menon.)

Sathyanadam.

"The Government could have made no better choice, but you cannot afford to desert your present profession, and I hope the appointment is without prejudice to your own work." T. V. Ramalinga Iyer, B. A., M. L., District Munsiff, Chittur.

"പൊതുജന ക്ഷേത്രങ്ങളിൽ പ്രവൃത്തിക്കുകയുള്ള നല്ല വകയായും തദ്ദേശവും തിരഞ്ഞ ഒരു ജനാധിപതാവാദിയായ നമ്മുടെ കൊച്ചി വിജ്ഞാപനങ്ങൾ കാര്യങ്ങൾക്കായി അവരോഹിച്ചതായ ഒരു വളരെയും സന്തോഷിക്കുകയും അവരോധകന്മാരെ അഭിനന്ദിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു."

(ഒപ്പ്) മരുമക്കൾ അനുജൻ നമ്പൂതിരിപ്പാട്
വടക്കാഞ്ചേരി.

(I am extremely glad that a true patriot like you, who have had good experience in doing service for

the public, have been appointed as the secretary to the Cochin Leg. Council. I congratulate those who appointed you.)

(Sd.) Alattur Aniyam Nambutiripad
Wadakanchery

Trichur,

17th June 1925

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

I have just heard that you have been appointed Secretary to the Cochin Legislative Council. Under present conditions in Cochin, a better choice could not have been made. This is what my knowledge of you leads me to think, and I trust I am in the company of all right-minded and really loyal subjects of His Highness in so thinking. So this is not a matter for people to congratulate you upon; rather they must congratulate themselves on having got the right man in the right place.

With all good wishes

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) C. Anthappai, B. A.,

"I believe I am only echoing the feelings of many sincere Cochinites when I say that His Highness' Government could not have made a better choice. You have now being given an opportunity to utilise your talents and energy to the best advantage of your land of birth, and to keep up the hereditary traditions of a noble stock who devoted their lives to the making of the present day Cochin". G. V. Subramanya Iyer.

"The Cochin Government are fortunate in securing the services of a gentleman with your culture and learning as the Secretary to the new council to be soon ushered into existence in that State."

P. K. Narayana Pillai, B. A., B. L., M. L. C.

Trivandrum.

"Though it may not be much to you, I am sure it will be of great benefit to the public, as the growth of our Legislative Council in its infancy will receive

much help from your experience and capacity. The Government has undoubtedly made the best possible selection for the office." P. Narayana Menon, M. A., B. L., Chief Court Judge, Ernakulam.

My revered master, Mr. K. Koshi, also did not fail to send me a word of cheer. "I read in one of the vernacular papers about your appointment as Secretary to the Cochin Legislative Council, and I thought the Council had got the right man for it. Heavy work will do you no harm so long as you are free from worry. When work is felt to be a burden, then is the time for giving it up and taking rest."

I realised the great hopes my friends and well-wishers had in their minds about me. I realised the confidence my Sovereign had reposed in me. I also knew the task that lay before me. I set to work with a will to succeed and not to fail in the performance of my duty. The pioneer work I had to do was enormous. The files in the office will show with what care, with what thought I did it. The Diwan-President, Mr. Narayana Iyer, gave me an absolutely free hand. That must be said to his credit. In the seating arrangements, in the formation of the library, in the admission of questions and resolutions, in the arrangement of the work — in fact, almost in every matter, I had full liberty to act as best as I thought. On three points he differed from me. The present President's gallery he wanted me to use as the President's seat. He said that the Chief Engineer agreed with him. I put up a note against that suggestion. On the President's platform, none but he should have a seat; so the rest of the space would be wasted. Further, it would be at one end instead of being in the centre. I scored. So with the chairs. He and the Diwan's Secretary were for wooden chairs. On account of the protest of members, all the chairs had to be changed before the second session. I told him that the rules should, in the beginning, be strictly enforced

and that a generous relaxation of them should be resorted to only with the lapse of time. He went the other way, and repented. After these experiences, his confidence in me became firm and intense. Mr. C.W. E. Cotton attended an early meeting of the Council. Afterwards, he went over the whole place. Then he complimented me, in the presence of the Diwan, by remarking that he had seen several Council Chambers, but nowhere was the arrangement so compact and symmetrical as that of this. He found no entrance to the terrace, a defect I had pointed out to the Chief Engineer. When about to leave, Mr. Cotton said that the terrace, he believed, was intended for monkeys and not for members. "May I convey that remark to Mr. Aravindaksha Menon?" I asked. "With my compliments," he replied.

I had the loyal cooperation and hearty help of every one in the office. Though I was a difficult taskmaster, they soon knew me as a generous chief. I treated them as friends, and refused to put on airs and play the role of an official. Our Council office easily came to be known for its efficiency and quick despatch. In all the six years I remained at the head of the Council office, not one could catch me asleep. I had an inveterate antagonist in the Council. Poor soul! he thought I was a blind creature of the Court. I suffered him; because I regarded him as a tonic to keep me on my alert. Once or twice, he tried to criticise me; but, when the facts were placed before the members, he had to hide his head in shame for his biased mistake.

The inauguration of the Council took place in the Audience Hall of the Hill Palace. His Highness the Maharaja graciously performed the ceremony in person in the presence of the Resident. Diwan Mr. Narayana Menon retired only after this ceremony. The first session—and that was the Budget session—was held under the Presidentship of Diwan Mr. Narayana Iyer.

Before Mr. Narayana Menon cleared out, he wrote to me this letter.

Ernakulam,
16th November 1923.

My dear Anivan,

Will you kindly step in here for a minute on your way to Court? I want to talk to you about somebody.

Yours affectionately,

(Sd.) P. Narayana Menon.

I went. In the presence of his wife, a nice lady and daughter of my old friend, vaki! Mr. Narayana Pillai of Irinjankuday, the Diwan made this request to me.

1971. 32- — അയ്യപ്പന്റെ ഉ-ച്ചുവന്നത്, അലകുളം അന്നി
യക്കാർ ആട്ടിപ്പിൽ ചങ്ങാലൻ പെട്ടാൻ കൊടുക്കുന്നു.

(N. M. — I would like to have Balakrishnan, brother of Annan, as manager in your office.)

In reply, I turned to his wife and said:

പ്രശ്നം — അയ്യ അയ്യ! എന്താണ് ഡിക്ലിയിന്മേലായ അതിർക്കുവാൻ വാദമുണ്ടാക്കുന്നത്? ഡിക്ലി എന്ന വാക്കിന്റെ എണ്ണപരമായതും, വായനപരമായും പൊതുവെ എന്തിൽ വേർതിരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഒരു കാര്യമെങ്കിലും, കർമ്മമുള്ള ചീന്താക്കലാണ് എന്ന് ധ്യാനിക്കേണ്ടത്.

(I — Animu Aniday! Narayana Menon tried all his eighteen tricks not to give me the Secretary's place. Therefore, I have great pleasure in acceding to your request. But there is one thing. He should not intentionally try to let me down.)

அவ. அம். —. என்று சொல்கிறது. அந்த ந. சி. பி. களைப்பாகியிருக்கிறது. அந்த அறிவிப்புகள்.

(A. A. — That I undertake. I know the close relationship that existed between my father and you.)

Mr. Balakrishna Menon was made the Head-Clerk and Manager of my office. He served me like a brother. In any emergency I could rely on him and on Mr. Venkatasubramanya Iyer. In truth, we three formed the backbone of the Legislative Council Office.

The first Budget Session was a particularly trying one. All of us were new to our work. The rules

I knew; but I had to learn from the reports of other Councils and assemblies of British India as to how to put them into practice. That my pains bore fruit would be evident from the accompanying letter which the Diwan wrote to me as the first act, so he told me, in the very evening the session closed. I had to be in the office for some time more to prepare the report which the Diwan-President had to daily submit to His Highness on each day's proceedings of the Council. When I went home, this was waiting for me.

D. O. No. 279-11/1100.

Ernakulam, Dated 8th August 1926.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

Now that the Legislative Council Budget Session is brought to a close, I have great pleasure in expressing my hearty appreciation of the excellent work you have done in making proper seating arrangements for the members of the Council and the visitors, for attending to the convenience and personal comforts of the members, and for the infinite pains you have taken in arranging the business of each day and in carrying it through in an admirable manner. I had my own misgivings as to how we would get on in this first business session. We have come out of the ordeal with splendid success, and no small part of it is due to your organising capacity, loyal devotion and admirable tact.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) T. S. Narayana Iyer.

This letter was immediately followed by another from the Sarvadbikarriakar to His Highness.

"It is indeed no wonder to me", he wrote, "that your admirable work was duly appreciated. But the pleasure of duty is felt when it is duly appreciated, and hence the letter from the Diwan is very apt. In fact, no words can adequately express the excellence

and success that has characterised your loyal endeavours.

"The Diwan has expressed to His Highness and Consort in person as well as in writing about your work.

"The Diwan's letter to you was read out to His Highness by the Consort herself, and it need hardly be said that all were immensely pleased.

"Pray, kindly accept my most hearty congratulations on the remarkable success achieved.

"All the rest will come in due course."

Yours very sincerely,

Sd. K. Narayana Pisharoti.

Nothing came in due course. That is the pity of it.

At a subsequent Budget Session, the work was overwhelming, and I feared a nervous breakdown. I consulted Dr. Rao, the Chief Medical Officer, who was then in the Council. In the evening, when he sent me the medicine for it, he kindly wrote these lines along with his directions for its use.

"Your strain is terrible. I don't think I shall be equal to it. But I must congratulate you for many things. No one else could have done better. This is not formality nor flattery."

At a third Budget session, the whole budget was thrown out by the Council. I got an early hint of this attempt on the part of the non-official members. I warned the Diwan of it in due time. As directed by him, the officials met to consider what could be done to counteract the non-official move. The Diwan asked the officials to move among the non-officials and, among other things, to tell them that an act like that would be a serious reflection on His Highness' rule. I wonder if any official did move among the non-officials. I did; and I was told by my friends that their only object was to hit the Diwan. That fact they made plain in their speeches.

The Diwan's request to the officials and their disinclination to comply with it warmly forces me to say that I found a few of them unable to comport themselves adroitly in their new surroundings. Their uncomfortable behaviour reminded me of these remarks of an experienced Council member of another day and land: "Ideas of self-importance which official worship fosters in India make them believe that they belong to a higher order of beings. It is one thing to draw out sonorous promises and smiling favours to those who wait at their gate or to cruelly draw away from them. It is another to face an assembly in which every man, while there, is equal to you. It requires tact and firmness to move among them and yet to keep the dignity of your office."

Once there was a tussle between the Council Office and the Huzur Secretariat. Mr. Kandir Menon, the Secretary to the Diwan, tried to make the Council office subordinate to him. I vehemently stood for the independence of the Council. The Diwan sided with me, but remarked that the two Secretaries were not on good terms. I told him that we were old friends, but that friendship did not come in there. The Diwan asked his Secretary to meet me. We had a straight talk, and Mr. Kandir Menon was glad to agree with my view of the question.

In a Malayalam weekly, *Saprabhatham*, there was an article entitled "Who is Who of the Cochin Legislative Council — by a constant Visitor". The writer was no other than Mr. C. Achyutha Menon, a member of the first Council. He there has given pen pictures of all the members of the Council. They were so true to nature that that issue in which these caricoes appeared had a brisk sale in the Council Hall.

He did not spare himself. This is what he has said about him: "Mr. C. Achuta Menon, B. A. — The member for Mulakunnathukavu is a man of the closet rather than of the platform. He seems too nervous or

self-conscious to attempt any long extempore speech. His performances are the result of careful preparation and smell of the midnight oil. Though an elected representative, he is more than half official in his sympathies and opinions. His position in the Council is thus one of isolation, which he does not seem to mind much. He evidently prefers to stand on his own head."

This is what he writes of me. "Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon, B. A., (Secretary to the Council).—Mr. Krishna Menon is a ready and effective speaker, but speaks seldom, being absorbed in his duties as Secretary, which he discharges unobtrusively, methodically and efficiently. The Government will find it to their advantage to make him their spokesman oftener."

As a matter of fact, the Diwan used to ask me to speak on certain occasions, specially, on adjournment motions when there was a necessity to talk them out. Though I was regarded as an official member, I refused to sell my birthright of freedom of thought. Once, there was a motion that had a reference to *swadeshi* articles. I was asked to vote against it. I went and told the Diwan my view of the matter and got his consent for myself to vote as I liked. Of this concession, other officials also took advantage.

Over one session, Mr. P. Damodara Menon presided as he was then the officiating Diwan. He sent for me and said that, as he was alien to the work, he would rely on me alone. I told him that I would see that his confidence was not misplaced. Just on the eve of his term of office, he wrote to me,

"It is impossible for me to thank you adequately for all the help you have rendered to me for the past one month. I know that, if I have achieved any success, the credit should entirely go to you. I shall remember it with gratitude always." He also added in that letter that he strongly advocated my case in the Palace. "They have agreed to consider the question

as early as possible. I was permitted to take it up if the other man did not come back now. But against all expectations he has come."

Out of jealousy and self-interest, I feared one or two were working there against my promotion and prospects, so that I did not expect any good from my friend's advocacy. For after the second Budget Session, there was a strong leader in the *Sathyavadam* of 14-8-1926 about the nature of my work and the utter inadequacy of the remuneration that was being given to me. During the course of a speech by Mr. A. B. Salem, he also emphatically adverted to this question. "Blessed are they that expect little, for they shall not be disappointed." That was my mental attitude. It was enough, I thought, if I had the good opinion of my master and of my fellow-members. That I knew I had in abundance. As for my office, we all worked like a team in full accord. When I left it, the staff wanted to honour me with a party.—To their request I sent the following reply which, I heard, they framed and placed in the office.

Kumalayam,
Diwan's Road,
Ernakulam, 27-8-1931.

Dear old Comrades in Office,

Please allow me to bid you a formal farewell. In doing so, let me thank you for the wish, you so kindly conveyed to me, to give some tangible shape to the love and regard you entertain towards me. In the light of the longish experience you have had of me, I know you will not take my refusal amiss. We shall not make a formal affair of the feelings we have for one another; let them grow in strength and sacredness. That is my desire.

I know you like me; I also trust you will have forgotten my faults. You must also have by this time realised that, if in aught I was hard, it was only to

make you efficient and to gain for our office the first place in the State for conduct and capacity.

I shall never forget the willing help you always gave me, even in difficult and pressing work, and the cheerful way you co-operated with me in gaining our goal. If I have not succeeded in my attempts to improve your pay, prospects and status, you, who have fought with me for these, will not put the blame on me for the failure. May better times await you. May God be with you.

Yours sincerely,
Sd. T. K. Krishna Menon.

XII. MY DAYS FOR EDUCATION.

The number of students whom I have helped with money, the number of libraries to which I have given books, and the number of institutions which were assisted with both, are too many to be listed here. They are too numerous and the assistance is spread over nearly half a century that, even if I cudgel my memory, I may remember only a few. I cannot find use, after all, in naming them. As for the students, some are officers, so that there is the question of delicacy in publishing their names. As a rule, only my wife and myself and the recipients know of the proffered help. We two have always regarded each act as a religious sacrifice at the altar of education; and the willing performance of it is its own remuneration. No other reward I expected, I wanted. Regular fees and, in several instances, even examination fees we have paid to students in schools, arts colleges, medical institutions, allopathic, ayurvedic and homeopathic. Not only Nayers, Christians and Brahmins, but Konkans, Chaliyans and others have come to me for help; and more who belonged to the

castes of Ixhuvas, Valans and Pūlayas. A lady of one of these classes, after her graduation, was supplied by my wife even with clothes for her to take up her place in the official world. All these we did with pleasure, and offered our grateful prayers to God for making us the instruments for these acts of His Grace. Just to show that I am not weaving a romantic web in my imagination, I shall extract a few sentences from some of the letters I have received on this subject.

"Syrian Church, Kandanad. 31-10-1907. We adorned our building with your photo from our deep-felt feelings of joy and gratitude. We owe you unlimitedly our best thanks."

"St. George's Church, Peramanoor. 30-8-1913. In recognition of the warm interest you take in the welfare of the educational institutions under my charge, I take this opportunity of sending a group photo of our schools."

Both the above are from the Rev. Fr. Vicars who were the managers of the schools concerned. Here is one from Capt. N. E. Antonson of the Salvation Army whom I helped to put up a school. "24-8-1921. The school shed is now ready, and I hope to be able to start the Day School tomorrow. It would be nice if you could come to have a look at it some day." I knew many of the officers of this army. For help and guidance, they invariably used to come to me. Miss Matiskainon, a lady from Finland, was a great friend of my wife, and she used to conduct herself as a member of our household. Mr. and Mrs. Antonson and Mr. and Mrs. Sanjivi too we regarded as our friends.

"I am at a loss to know how I am to thank you for the kindness with which you have responded to my appeal. You instilled hopes into me at a most critical and desperate stage and, thereby, you conferred a great boon on the poor family to which I belong. K."

"Now that God has permitted me to win the invaluable acquaintance of such a benefactor as yourself, let it not fail your patience when I make one final request to you, that is to be kind enough to bestow on me whatever advice you deem conducive to the advancement and uplift of the community to which I belong. K." "You have helped me a lot during my course so that I would not be justified if I were to ask you for more; but I am doing it now as my case is desperate. R" "I am deeply moved by your kind act and, take it from me, I am indebted to you for ever. M."

When the Numbutiri Vidyalaya was started, I was not slow to recognise it as a sign of the times, and to help it in the way that I could. I also took the liberty to suggest to its prime-movers that it should in no way be a means of undermining the religious background and the unique culture of the Malayali Brahmins. The extract given below is from the letter to me of Br. Sri. A. K. T. K. M. Cheriya Narayanan Namputiripad, the President of the Vidyalaya Committee.

No. 1375. 11-11-96. Mangalavilassu, Shoranur.

"വിദ്യാലയത്തിന്റെ കർമ്മശൃംഖലയ്ക്കുള്ള പ്രത്യേക ഏർപ്പാടുകൾ വളരെ ഉപയോഗപ്രദമാണ്. അതിനെ പരിപാലിക്കുവാൻ സമർത്ഥനായ നാളെ പ്രത്യേക പരിരക്ഷയ്ക്കുണ്ടാകും. ഏതു സമയത്തുണ്ടായാലും ഉപയോഗ വന്നാൽ കൊള്ളാമെന്നു വിജ്ഞാപനം ചെയ്തുകൊള്ളാം."

"... കൂടുതൽ ഉള്ള ദിവസം എങ്കൽനിന്നു വന്നു ഗുണഭോജങ്ങൾ വാങ്ങുന്നവരെപ്പോലും കൂടുതൽ ഓൺ കൗൺസിലർമാരുമുണ്ടാകട്ടെ."

(I have realised Kunhikrishna Menon's interest in the Vidyalayam. It is very gratifying that that interest is manifested in various ways. I request that you should turn up this time, whatever other urgent call there might be.

... I have requested even at the begining that occasionally you should pay a visit when the classes are working and give us your considered directions and advices.)

I have always admired the great work the Sri Ramakrishna Mission has all along been doing. That is how I came to help in my humble way their institutions at Mayavati, Pudukad, Vilangaus, Kalati and other places. I got a place for the mission at Trichur. I felt acutely sad when I heard there was a split in the camp. To avoid the evil effects of it in Kerala, which began to be felt here, I tried my best to create a Kerala Federation of the Mission. But difficulties stood in my way, and I had to give up my attempt in despair.

Attached to the Ramakrishna Asramam at Pudukad, for the construction of which I assisted Agamananda Swami and Arjavananda Swami in several ways, I built a large Library Hall there in memory of my beloved and revered mother. The Hall was formally opened on 4-10-1930. To that I sent many books too. About the same time, I made a dispensing room, to honour the name of my dear brother, in Keralaeya Ayurvedic Samajam Hospital at Shoranur. I am a member of that Samajam. The help the Cochin Government has given to that Hospital is simply invaluable; but, till recently, it had no voice in its management. The connected file was once sent to me by Diwan Sir Vijayaraghava Chari to see if I could find a way for the Government to handle it, so as to convert it into a Hospital and an school fit to stimulate and further the Ayurvedic system of treatment. I could not find my way to advise the Government to act in a manner that will materialise my ambition. However, I continued helping it.

"From the Secretary of the Samajam, Shoranur. 25-8-1930. We felt extremely glad of your visit to Samajam Vaidyasala. It is no exaggeration to say that your magnanimity is unequalled. When we were not certain that the Cochin Government would give us some timber free, you voluntarily offered to give some timber You offered the gift, not for

praise or name, but purely out of love to the suffering humanity."

To the Gurukulam at Vilangans, the Sanskrit School attached to the Kalati Advaita Asrama, the Vivekodayam School at Trichur, I have contributed my humble quota of help. In the last of these, I have also created, on the occasion of the completion of the 60th year of my wife, an endowment for the award of a prize in the name of my wife, to the pupil in Sanskrit and Malayalam respectively, who comes out first in alternate years.

"From the Governor of the Gurukula Visvavidyalaya, Kangri, Bijnor District, No 11025 of 5-2-1927. According to your instructions, the sum has been placed as a Trust Endowment in the name of "Krishna-Kalyani Prize." The interest will be spent for a prize to be given to a "well behaved, pious student for religious studies. I heartily congratulate you on this noble deed."

A similar endowment was founded, as early as 18-10-1911, in the Sanatana Dharma Vidyasala at Alleppey, and the donation for it was acknowledged by the President of the Vidyasala Committee.

For starting "The Chathu Panikkar Lectureship", in memory of my great father, I have given on 9-12-1932, to the Government one thousand rupees.

Kumaralayam, Diwan's Road,
Ernakulam, 11-6-04.

The terms and conditions of the lectureship shall be as follows:—

1. The lecture shall be delivered annually at the Maharaja's College, Ernakulam, on any subject literary or scientific, social or economical, political or historical, connected with the Ancient History and Archeology of Kerala in general or of Cochin in particular.

2. The lecturer shall be selected every year not less than six months before the date of the lecture by a Committee consisting of the Director of Public Instruction, the Principal of the Maharaja's College and myself. After my life-time the third member of the Committee shall be elected by the other two aforesaid members.

3. Should, in any year, the lecture be not delivered, the unexpended interest shall be added to the corpus of the fund.

4. The lecture shall, in the first instance, be published by the Committee in the Maharaja's College Magazine with the following prefatory note:

This lectureship was founded by Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon in memory of his father, Nanthikara Chathu Panickar, who was for a long time a Tasildar-Magistrate in the Cochin State. He was not only great as an officer, but also as a poet, scholar, actor and architect. Thrice was he given *Veerasankhala* by the then Ruler of the State for his talents and services to the State.

It has been possible for me to get many great scholars to lecture under the auspices of this endowment, which has in no small measure stimulated research work among them.

I have always worked for my College. I did my best, along with those immediately connected with the College, to raise the status of the College and to change its name, and to see it located in a healthy, spacious and fitting locality. Successive Principals of the College would certainly testify to the fact that they had my services at their command for anything and everything connected with the welfare of the institution. I considered it as a moral, sacred duty to serve my College as best as I could. As early as the close of 1918, I began to work for the starting of an old Boys' Association, of the College Day celebrations and of a College Magazine. Early in 1914, I

had a long talk on these matters with H.H.Ammaman Thampuram who warmly allied himself with me to work for these. I wrote to Mr. Glyn Barlow on the subject. Here is his reply.

Ernakulam,
Wednesday.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

I dropped over yesterday evening to see you. I was in my boat on the backwater, and rowed round to your house, but you were not at home.

Before calling that meeting, I should like to discuss with you the general outlines of the scheme. For myself, I have some suggestions to make It would be awkward if at the meeting I found myself opposed to the general views I should prefer to discuss things *in camera* with you before hand, and then to call a meeting when we are agreed.

If you care to come out on the backwater this evening or tomorrow or any other day this week (except Friday), we could discuss it pleasantly and although not literally *in camera*, very much *in camera* in the natural sense.

Yours sincerely
(Sd.) Glyn Barlow

We met and talked on 17-1-1914, but he called the meeting only on 13-3-1914. Though the attendance was not sufficiently stimulating, we did some good work, and outlined a very practical scheme to be gradually brought into being.

It has always been my firm conviction that a vocational bias should be introduced into the curriculum of studies in the schools of the State, so that those poor boys and girls who are forced to stop their studies at an early stage may have something to fall back upon for their livelihood. One should be encouraged to honour one's hereditary profession. An

elementary training in agriculture will be beneficial to those who come from rural areas. To make rural life rich, cottage industries and handicrafts suitable to particular localities should be stimulated by the Government. My pen and tongue I have used to emphasise my position; and I have in my humble way tried to practically demonstrate my interest in this subject whenever any opportunity presented itself to me.

"I have the honour to acknowledge with thanks" so wrote Mr. K. Rama Menon, M.A., L.T., the Inspector of Schools, Southern Division, to me (C.N.2409/99 of 25-5-1924) "receipt of your letter, dated 1-10-1099, together with the list of persons and institutions to whom prizes are to be awarded, as also the donation list and the amount of Rs. 101-14-0 as shown in it.

"As suggested in the letter, an exhaustive list of handicrafts that could be profitably introduced into the schools has been prepared and rough sketches of them have been taken too. For better developing handicrafts, I am proposing the entertainment of an assistant in each division, whose duties shall be not only to go round, guide and direct the teachers by practical demonstration, but also to organise sales of articles made in schools by finding out proper markets for the same

"My best thanks are due to you for your invaluable help. I am sure that this help will be realised by hundreds of teachers and pupils in the various parts of this division, especially when the prizes you have so magnanimously awarded reach their institutions in a day or two."

To my deep dismay I early realised that there was no patron nor public, and no agency whatever, to encourage or to preserve the very valuable folklore of ancient Kerala. Mr. V. K. Rama Menon, Mr. T. A. Doraswami Iyer and myself once made an earnest

endeavour to start a Folklore Society for Kerala. The response to our appeal was not at all encouraging; it was extremely frigid. Before that, unaided, I approached Mr. Davies, the Head of the Educational Department, and requested him to find his way to introduce the folksongs and the folkdances in the Girls' Schools of the State. He gave me the cold shoulder. Mr. Davies was a good educationist and had organising powers too. He was a strict disciplinarian. Though we were friends, whenever, I thought, he had gone wrong, I used to say so. That free expression of opinion he did not like. "The conduct of Mr. Davies" wrote Mr. Damodara Menon, the Sarvadhikari, to me on 3-12-1915, "in the matter of overlooking the claims of Mr. M.S.M's daughter is simply scandalous. I hope that proper representations will be made to the Diwan and, if necessary, to His Highness also. We are a set of cowards, and unless we show more spirit, there is no salvation for us. The non-official public could do wonders if there are half a dozen men like you amongst them. Will a day ever come? The education question is engaging the attention of His Highness. His Highness wants a thorough revision of the Code. In the meantime, His Highness will be glad if you will make some definite proposals regarding the constitution of the Text-Book Committee and the Board of Examiners." I wonder if my work in matters like these coloured the conduct of Mr. Davies in the position he assumed towards my 'Kai-kottikali' scheme. However, I proceeded with my work undismayed.

I then got two good silver cups made, took them to Mrs. Bhole, explained to her the nature of the folksongs and folkdances of Kerala and how they would contribute to the physical and artistic education of the girls, and offered the cups to be used for the encouragement of the subject. She gladly fell in with my idea and took me at once to her husband who,

after having heard us, assured me that he would consult Mr. Davies and see that something was done soon. He asked me to send the cups with a formal request to himself. This I did; and, in acknowledging them, the Secretary to the Diwan informed me that steps would be taken to give effect to my wishes. (L & L, Dept. C.No. 1127/92 of 8-12-1916). Mr. Davies evidently did not like my move. He told the Diwan that the ladies of the day did not practise *Kaikottikali* and *Kolattam* and these were considered out of fashion. But I had anticipated these objections of his and met them with my explanations in my talk to the Diwan. By way of taking action on my letter to the Diwan, Mr. Davies issued a circular to gauge the opinion of the educated public. He thought that the educated men would be against the introduction of these in the girls' schools. I had prepared the ground for the reception of my proposal, so that he was disappointed there. On 26-4-1917, the Diwan's Secretary sent me the remarks of the Inter-School sports Committee on the subject and a copy of the draft rules for my suggestions.

To elucidate my reply to this Government Communication, I have to make a digression. I wanted to start boating too, a sport in which I took great interest. So, I had sent a cup for boating too. My mother's name is Kuttippam Amma and the Consort's name Parukutti Amma (Paru stands for Parvathi). So I named it the Parvathi Cup. During the time of Mr. Sealy, he encouraged aquatic sports among the students; but, after his day, there was a dead stop to them. I felt it a great pity that, in spite of the facilities it possessed for boating, the College owned no boating club. Mr. Glyn Barlow who, for a short time, was the Principal of the Ernakulam College, had artistic tastes and also was a nice sportsman. He liked boating. Occasionally we two used to go out in a small boat; we two would be at the oars

and a Vala young man at the helm. Once, when I was arguing a case in the Ernakulam Magistrate's Court, his peon came running with a note in which he said that he wanted to buy a boat for the College, and asked me to go with him to assist him in testing one, and in fixing its price if it turned out to be good. Seeing the look of the peon, the Magistrate kindly said, "If it is anything urgent, you can go, Mr. Krishna Menon. We can continue the argument early to-morrow." I thanked him, hurried to Mr. Barlow's place, and after tea, we started. The boat we found to be a nice one, but, as its owner was not on the spot, we had to wait for an hour, and could return only after night-fall. When in the middle of the Kumbalam lake, there arose a sudden, unexpected squall, with heavy rain. The drops I felt as if small pebbles were pelted at my face. I could feel the water coursing its way from head to foot. We both pulled our oars hard. When I found the wind and rain not abating, I asked my friend, "Shall we take shelter on the shore?", to which he said, "Never. We shall then catch cold. A vigorous pull we shall make." He forced me to get down at my landing place. By the time I finished my bath, his peon came with a note from Mrs. Barlow to my wife. It was a short one and contained this sentence: "Never allow your husband to go out boating with my husband." My wife reciprocated the sentiments, and sent a few ripe mangoes too. Now I shall return to the reply I sent to the Secretary to the Government.

"Sir — I am in receipt of your R. O. C. No. 1137/92, dated 26.4.1917. My wife and myself do not in any way wish to hamper the hands of the Government in the matter of the competition for the cups. We only hope that these will induce girls to take some enthusiasm in their physical education, and stimulate boys to take to boating. So that, the few suggestions that I make, agreeably to your request,

the Durbar may or may not adopt.

"First as to hoisting. I am not for confining it to the southern Taluqs. Let it be open to the whole State; those who care may take part in it. Then, about the crew, I would prefer 7 to 11, which is the present strength.

"I admit that the cups for girls will present difficulties of a delicate nature in that these items of sports will be a novel feature here. But I think it will be the talk of the town only for a time. I would request that, for the present, exercise with dumb-bells and on rings may be omitted; and, in their stead, Kunmi, Kaikottikali, and flag-drills and action-songs may be introduced. The finals shall be held at Trichur; the other preliminary competitions can be held in the several schools, the judges alone going round. This will obviate most of the difficulties apprehended by the Sports Committee.

"My wife and myself are grateful to the Government for this reference."

The rules, with a few changes, were approved by the Government, and the Superintendent of Stamps, in whose custody our cups were kept, was asked to send them to the Director of Education. (Order dated 3-8-1917, C. No. 1127/92 - L & L Dept.)

The troubles did not cease with this order. The girls from certain distant parts of the State found it hard to attend the final competition at Trichur. The teachers from the lower grade schools began to complain that year after year the cups were being carried away by girls in the higher grade schools. To obviate these difficulties, we gave two more cups. "This will enable you" so I wrote on 12-12-1928 to the Director of Public Instruction, "to have two cups for the northern and two for the southern centres. One of the two cups in each centre shall be set apart for the lower grade, and the other for the higher grade among the schools that now compete for the cups."

In that letter I also wrote that my wife and myself wished to hand over to the Government Rs. 500, the interest of which might be utilised for the encouragement of music and painting among the girls in the High Schools of the State. The rules framed for the award of these prizes were published in the Cochin Government Gazette of 15-10-1104 (Ref. No. P. 630/04, dated 21-2-1929, of the Office of the Director of Public Instruction). The third rule runs thus: "The price for music shall be confined to the pupils of the High School classes of the Victoria Jubilee Girls' High School, Trichur; while that for painting will be open to all the pupils of the highest class in all the Sircar High Schools for girls. The Head of each competing school shall state that the paintings sent by each school are done by the pupils themselves, unaided by any advice or co-operation." The rules were approved by the Government in Diwan's Proceedings dated 4-4-1929, Dis. No. 223/R/1104, and I was asked to deposit the amount in the Government Servants' Co-operative Society, Ltd., Ernakulam, in the name of the Diwan of Cochin and to forward the receipt to the Director (Ref. No. P. 630/1104 of 9-4-1929), which I accordingly did.

A few years before this, in 1095, I very much desired to have a music academy in Ernakulam. I consulted my friend, Mr. T. A. Doraswamy Iyer, who was a renowned musician. He said he would consult some of the great musicians that would gather in his residence during the Thyagaraj-Ulsavam which he proposed to celebrate that year. So, in due time, I sent him a decent sum and took that occasion to remind him of the need for a music school here. Here is his characteristic reply:

Ernakulam,
25-5-1095

My Dear Friend,

I cannot sufficiently thank you for your expression

of good wishes. It is only worthy of you, son of the late Mr. Chatlu Panikar Tasildar, to have such feelings towards the advancement of the art of music.

Your handsome contribution towards this will be utilised in the best way possible. I have preserved your very kind letter not only as a token of your love of music but also as a good omen showing the future success of the undertaking.

I request you to be good enough to go over here this evening and assist me in preparing the programmes to be gone through for the next three days. I want to hold a meeting on Sunday to consider what effective steps can be taken to encourage the art of music.

Yours very affectionately,
Sd. T. A. Doraswamy Iyer.

At the meeting, a committee of three was asked to draw up a scheme and to prepare a set of rules for the working of an academy. But, sad to say, no fruit was gathered out of the scheme and the constitution.

I was for a long time connected with the Madras University. For more years than I can now remember, I was on its Board for Malayalam Studies. As a member of that body, it was possible for me to help in some small way poets and prose-writers of real merit, and to prevent bad books from being prescribed as books for study. After a somewhat stormy meeting while the members were proceeding to refresh themselves, it was my pleasure to hear one of the combatants tell another in these terms: "Mr. Krishna Menon is terribly outspoken. He looks at the books, never for the authors." To drive my point home, at times, I had to be brutal in my plainness. Once, when a book, which, according to me, was not fit to be selected, was being, insistently sponsored by one or two members, I had to say that, but for the thickness of

the paper, that could have been utilised for covering tooth-powder. The author of that was a high official. The advocates of that book tried to get me out of the Board at the next election and all but succeeded in their attempt. Mr. Candeth, then a Syndic member, chanced to scent this conspiracy, and had not much difficulty in defeating its nefarious object. Here is his letter after his triumph.

12 College Road,
Cathedral, P. O.,
18-3-18.

My Dear Friend,

..... I pointed out that yourself and Appan Thampuran were two of the most distinguished names and that, so long as I am on the Board, I could not agree to any proposal to drop you out, and that I would resign if either of these names were dropped out.

"I wish you had not known of this attempt to get you out. It was a disgusting business and the men responsible for it ought to be ashamed of themselves. There was never the slightest chance of this intrigue succeeding, because Dr. Meston had promised to see you through, and in any case I would not have consented to serve on a Board from which your name was omitted. If I had been on the Academic Council, I would certainly have used strong language, and would have pointed out that you are one of the outstanding names in Malayalam literature long before any one ever heard of these wretched people. You can rest assured that, so long as Ramunni Menon and I have anything to do with the University, your name will always be regarded as perhaps the most necessary on the Malayalam Board. Now that the University has decided that Malayalam is to be taught so as to make it a vehicle of modern ideas, it has become absolutely

essential to have your help, guidance and experience. With regards.

Yours effecttionately,
Sd. M. A. Candeth

Mr. Candeth has gone to his rest full of deeds, though cut off in the prime of life. As a professor, he was the beau ideal of students, whose veneration for him was equalled only by his devotion to their interests. Like that of the Parish Priest, his house was always open to them. His sympathy and support was sure whether they went to him confused with doubt or oppressed with grief. His personal charm, his sparkling wit, and his wide and varied knowledge made him fascinating in any cultured company, while his work connected with his high office and with the University was such as to entitle him to a high place among south Indian Educationists. This is not the place to dwell on the agony of personal bereavement. But I cannot resist the temptation to say a few words about one who was to me a real friend.

I was not surprised to hear that one of the two arch conspirators who attempted to see me out, could not get in, while the other, out of pity to his place, had to be tracked in by a side-door. Anyway, I was glad of their plot, for it drew out the above generous letter from my friend. As my colleagues I used to have His Highness Appan Thampuram, Mr. Ullur Parameswara Iyer, Mr. Mulivil Krishnan, M. Seshagiri Prabhu and a few others who had done great service to Malayalam; and we all worked together harmoniously in the cause of our mother-tongue. I was also on the Examination Board for some years, both as examiner and as a Chairman of the general and of the Oriental Titles Examination Boards. My work in the latter capacity was very hard and I felt relieved when I was in a position to reasonably resign my place before I started on a pilgrimage to the holy places in Northern India. I believe it was this long

connection of mine with the Madras University that induced the Universities of Benares and Hyderabad and even the Public Service Commission of the Government of India to invite me as an examiner for some of the ordeals under them.

In 1929, I was invited by the University to deliver a course of three lectures under the auspices of the Dravidian Section of its Oriental Research Institute for a handsome remuneration and other incidental expenses. (No. 21192 of 5-10-1929.) My idea was to speak on those *Sandesa Kavyas* that are connected with Kerala. But, while I was preparing for my work, certain events forced me to give it up, which I did with extreme regret. My friend, Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai, was then offered the place which, of course he filled with his usual conspicuous ability. I was also on the Committee of 5 members, with the Vice-Chancellor as the President, constituted to consider the applications received by the University for the appointment of Lecturers in the Malayalam Department and to make recommendations to the Syndicate. (No. 10166 of 20-5-1930). My suggestion, which I put forth with convincing arguments, to make the Chief Lectureship a triennial appointment was accepted by the Committee. But the result turned out to be otherwise. My idea, if carried out, would have been beneficial to the University, to the Malayalam Scholars and to the cause of Malayalam Literature.

On the 24th of February 1933, I got this telegraphic message from the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor: "His Excellency proposes to nominate you to the Senate of the Madras University. Please wire if you are willing to serve it." Of course, I wired my grateful acceptance of the offer, and, because I thought there was the friendly hand of the Vice-Chancellor behind it, I thanked him as well. Several congratulated me on

my being nominated to the Senate by the Chancellor. From one letter I shall quote these few sentences; it is from Mr. A. Gopala Menon, M.A., B. Com. (London) of Trivandrum, and is dated 28.2.1933. He retired as the Director of Education of Travancore. "My dear Sir— I was very pleased to find your name among those nominated by the Chancellor of the Madras University. So far as one in your position is concerned, it is more a matter to congratulate the University than you. But I am glad that your eminence for learning and culture has received this recognition from the Govt. of Madras With best regards.

Yours very sincerely
(Sd) A. Gopala Menon."

As a senator I served my University with all devotion for three years. In that capacity, I came in contact with Dr. A. Lekshmanaswami Mudaliyar, whose friendship I have the honour to own. In his profession, his ability stands unquestioned. As a Syndic member, he was the right-hand person of the Vice-Chancellor, Sir K. Ramunni Menon. Between them they raised the status of our University to an enviable position. It was an education to me to work under two such distinguished senators.

Egmore,
4th December 1934.

My dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

I must apologise to you for not having written to you for such a long time. I hope you will not take it amiss but I was postponing every day to write to you how grateful I felt for all that you have done for me.

The invitation has come to me for the Diamond Jubilee Lectures at Ernakulam, and I have ventured to accept it simply because of the pressure of friends like you.

With regard to the oil painting of Sir K. Ramunni Menon, I hope you are proceeding apace.

Both of us are looking forward to a pleasant stay there for a few days.

With all good wishes.

Yours very sincerely,
(Sd.) A. L. Mudaliar.

Once he kindly wrote me, "I know perfectly well that there are few friends more interested in me than yourself". For various, tangible reasons, I was keen on seeing a course in Journalism started by the University. This letter of 4-11-1935 has reference to that subject. "Thank you for your kind letter. I shall certainly bear in mind all the points that you have in mind. As a matter of fact, we have got the curricula of studies from London. I am hoping to get it from Harvard also. I hope it will be possible for us to start the course next year if the Academic Council and the Senate should finally approve the scheme."

"The oil painting is ready but I do not know when to fix it up."

That is of Sir K. Ramamuni Menon. It was soon after put up in the Senate House among the paintings of former Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors. I think I may fittingly say a few words here of my life-long friend, Sir K. Ramamuni Menon. I was his classmate for four years and has been his friend for over half a century. He has amply fulfilled the promise of his youth. After a brilliant collegiate career in India and in Cambridge, he had the rare honour of succeeding his revered master, Dr. Bourne, to the professorship of Zoology in the Presidency College. He was an ideal teacher. His enthusiasm for his science led bands of students to take a genuine interest in their subject. No holidays owned him. He was wedded to his laboratory. Even the nurses and the graces he left severely alone. The union of his intellect and character has always been marked by a certain grandeur of mould and icy reticence; and his studied

detachment, I feared, must have been a source of despair to many. But his friends and students realised that the ramparts of his reserve was by no means impregnable. They came to know that, behind a somewhat austere exterior, there beat a soft, sensitive heart that responded to sympathy and all generous instincts. But he never cared to contest for the prize of praise. Friends could not induce and less force him to do a deed, which his conscience did not applaud. For all that, he had to bear the heat and burden of the unregarded day. However, his merits at last came to be recognised. First he was made the Registrar and then the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University. This was a fitting crown to his long and able services to the cause of learning. To the work of the University he brought a zeal and devotion which stand unsurpassed. He showed that a great scientist can be a good educationist and an efficient administrator. His scientific training, I should say, guarded him from the seductive glimmerings of false lights and from the calculating subtleties of the world, and by his loftiness of purpose and sedulous adherence to high-toned principles, he has planted the great Hereafter in the Now, and has created a reputation for the Madras University of which all may justly be proud, and for which a grateful posterity will hold in undying remembrance the name of Sir K. Ramuni Menon.

While a senator, I was commissioned by the University to inspect the First Grade College at Trivandrum, and to report on the facilities that existed there to start the Honours Course in Malayalam. Soon after I reached there, I got a private, personal hint from Mr. R. A. Statham, the Director of Education, that, if the course turned out to be a costly one, there was then no immediate chance for it. I told him that, if there was a hope for it anywhere, it was in Trivandrum, and that I proposed to examine every

possible avenue to its being started there. Professor V. Krishnan Thampi, the Head of the Department of Oriental Studies, co-operated with me in a most welcome spirit. We two alone knew the anxious moments we spent in discussing the details of the scheme. Both of us did want a substantial scheme, not a shadow. When I paid my respects to His Highness the Maharaja, he was pleased to remark, "I am glad you have come for the work." "With your Highness's grace, I hope to see the course started, if possible, with the next academic year", I answered with due humility. "I am glad to hear that. You may count on my entire support." That expression of encouragement assisted me in my work to a great extent. Finally, it was possible for Mr. Statham to write to me on 24-11-35, "I am extremely grateful to you for all the interest you have shown regarding the opening of Malayalam Honours." As if to compensate for my hard work, Prof. Krishnan Thampi and Dr. Goda Varma complimented me with the reward of their friendship. Dr. Goda Varma is an indefatigable worker, and is one who is well-equipped for his work. Of Prof. Thampi, my friend, the late P. K. Narayana Pillai, once said, "Next to Sri Padmanabhaswami, I would worship Krishnan Thampi in Trivandrum." His idea was to lay aside the yoke of office on an early day and to devote himself entirely to the enrichment of the Malayalam Literature. But alas! that was not to be. He left us all before his time, and Malayalam could not gather the ripe fruits of his mellowed wisdom. The works he has left behind would clearly indicate what a rich harvest it would have been. It was left to me to mourn his loss and to pay my humble tribute to him in an introduction to a life of his, published by one of his admirers. The memory of his friendship shall ever remain green in my heart. In the last letter that he wrote to me — he was very frugal in his words and in his correspondence,

and scrupulously firm and sincere in his alliance to his principles — these words occur: "I can, however, look upon you only as a *guru*, as your place is in the cultural school to which my revered *guru* belonged — the late Prof. Rajaraja Varma, and of which we have just another example here now, — Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai. I look forward to receiving timely guidance, correction and inspiration from you at all times."

As to Dr. Goda Varma, I insisted on his concentrating his talents and energy to one or two important works, instead of frittering them on several small subjects. To that request of mine, he wrote to me, on 30-2-1925, a long reply, from which a few sentences may be quoted here:

"... I shall consider myself greatly honoured if you will bestow on me your parental regards, and will look upon me as a *sisya* and an admirer of yours. . . .

"I believe I shall be able to leave something solid behind, provided I get proper direction and encouragement from scholars of your experience and attainments."

"The idea of compiling an etymological dictionary of Malayalam has been in my mind for a long time. I am waiting for the earliest opportunity to meet you and discuss with you the details of the plan

"I should thank you for the kindness and patience with which you have gone through my thesis. It is indeed a consolation for me to know that there are a few persons like you to appreciate such hard-dóné work."

Before I left Trivandrum, I was able to do a bit of propaganda work. I felt happy over that opportunity. A few of the College societies wanted me to address their meetings. I had no time to satisfy all of them. Over this difficulty I sought the advice of

Mr. Krishnan Thampi. He said he would arrange a combined meeting of all the college societies over which I could preside and give a talk. That meeting was held on 28-11-1934. Before me, two students, and Mr. Anantan Pillai of the Malayalam department and Mr. Malloor Govinda Pillai spoke. The subject was "The need for a Kerala University". Only one of the students spoke against it. That student had also a bad word to say about *Kathakali*, and one or two items peculiar to Kerala. Thus he delivered himself into my hands, Mr. Govinda Pillai handled him properly. I spoke as one possessed, so Mr. Govinda Pillai said. So I felt. For the Kerala University and *Kathakali* are my favourite themes. I would not, could not brook any reproach about them. So intensely I felt that the audience too reciprocated my feelings in an unmistakable fashion. And the motion in favour of a Kerala University was unanimously passed with enthusiastic acclamation.

While a member of the Senate, I got an opportunity to carry on a propaganda in favour of a Kerala University. The vision of a Kerala University was not new to me. For years it has been taking a definite shape in my mind. I early realised that, for the advancement of Kerala, cultural and otherwise, a Kerala University is an essential element. On the 4th of May 1923, my diary thus records from Coonoor: "Glad to hear that Mr. C. Mathai is to be the next Director of Public Instruction. Had a long talk with him about an all-Kerala University. I wrote to Kollengode Vasudeva Raja and Messrs. P. K. Narayana Pillai and E. J. John about this cherished scheme of mine." Again, on the 10th of May, there is this entry. "From Coonoor I came to Calicut to see some prominent persons and to make them take an interest in all-Kerala University. I saw Messrs. G. T. Verghese, Manjeri Ramier, C. Krishnan, Appu

Nedungadi, and Madhava Raja, the President of the Malabar District Board. They are all with me and have promised to co-operate with me." That others in Cochin were like myself interested in the subject will be seen from these extracts from two letters. The first is from Mr. C. Mathai, and the second from Mr. C. Achyuta Menon. "12-5-1923. I am glad your mission to Calicut has been successful. I hope the leaders there have addressed the Travancore Committee as some of our non-official representatives have already done. Our Durbar also has officially addressed the British Resident on the subject." "3-10-1928. I am glad that you went to Calicut and spoke to some of the leaders. I too have written to a number of them. It is enough at this stage if they send a representation to the Committee similar to the one we have sent." The Committee referred to is the Travancore University Committee presided over by Rao Bahadur E. V. Ranganaswamy Iyengar. When that Committee visited the Cochin State to canvass opinion on the points referred to the Committee by the Travancore Durbar, it was hinted that the Chairman of the Committee had an idea to link Tinnevely also with the scheme. So, I told him that I was for a Kerala University and, if that were not possible, I would desire that Cochin would continue to be honourably connected with the Madras University instead of being the tail-end of Travancore-Tinnevelly University. He did not relish my blunt remark. But, during a discussion on this point over a dinner to which I had invited the Nayar members of the Committee, these unanimously endorsed my remark, and condemned the suggestion of the Chairman. My remark left no ill-will behind. For, he wrote to me "I am also happy at the opportunity afforded by the work of the Committee to form the acquaintance of one of whom I had heard so much for many years, and whom I had long wished to meet." We are friends,

and I have great admiration for his profound scholarship and his remarkable organising power.

The desirability of a Pan-Kerala University was not left untouched in the Report of the Committee constituted by the Cochin Government by R.O.P. No. 82, 1100, dated 4-10-1924, to formulate a scheme for a First Grade College in Cochin. This step was taken in gracious response to a memorial submitted to His Highness by some of his subjects. The members of the Committee were "the Director of Public Instruction (Chairman), the Principal of the Ernakulam College, Messrs. C. Anthappan, T. K. Krishna Menon, S. K. Subramanyam Iyer and C. Achutha Menon (Secretary). The terms of reference included, "(1) the need or otherwise for a First Grade College in the State, (2) its location, (3) the desirability or otherwise of partnership with any private agency, and (4) the possibility or otherwise of starting it from the next academic year, and locating it in the College buildings at Ernakulam till permanent buildings are constructed. We suggested Anappam near Trichur as a possible site for the future location of the College; and, in so doing, we also remarked that it should fall into line with a future Kerala University for the consideration of which we recommended that a Committee of the representatives of the three Governments in Kerala might be materialised.

Such an opportunity did present itself before the Governments. The Inspection Commission of the Madras University was keen on the constitution of a Committee for the consideration of this important subject. "The Commission is anxious to acquaint itself with local public opinion on the question of new Universities, and would like to have the subject discussed at a conference." (No. 12827 of 28.8-1928, Office of the Registrar of the Madras University.)

The Cochin Darbar had, in pursuance of the request made by the Vice-Chancellor, nominated

The Director of Public Instruction,

The Principal of the Ernakulam College,

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon,

„ T. K. Krishna Menon, and

The (Catholic) Bishop of Trichur

to represent them on the Committee to consider the Kerala University scheme (Order dated 16-12-1924, R. O. C. No. 1567/1100). As others did not warmly take up this work, the Committee was not fully formed and so, nothing came out of this project.

When the report of the Travancore University Committee was under the consideration of the Regency regime of Travancore, I was asked by my friends to proceed to Trivandrum. How keen we all were would be evident from this extract from a letter of Mr. C. Mathai to me, dated 28-1-1925: "I thought you would have gone to Trivandrum by now, but I am told you have not started yet. I hope you will be able to go down soon and will succeed in persuading the Travancore Government to adopt a reasonable attitude towards the Pan-Kerala scheme. I am leaving tomorrow for Madras and hope to find out how matters are developing there. As I told you, I do not anticipate any difficulty so far as our First Grade College is concerned, but it is of the utmost importance that we should come to an understanding with Travancore and Maabar in regard to the All-Kerala scheme." I did not go to Travancore, because, from a reliable quarter, I got an assurance that for various reasons, the recommendations of the Committee were not likely to be taken up for consideration during the period of the Regency. I never left the subject even when a new administration came into the sister State. When I went to attend the annual conference of the All-Kerala Sahitya Parishad, I appealed to Their Highnesses the Maharaja and the Maharani on

my bended knees to give their blessing to a Kerala University. But all my slender hopes in that direction were finally blasted by a letter from that scholar and statesman Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, the Diwan of Travancore, in which he stated, "So far as the University scheme is concerned, you know what has been happening, and I may inform you at once that all the preliminary steps have been taken and provision in the budget for the next year has been made in respect of the Travancore University." The Travancore University has come into existence, and it has necessarily delayed the consummation of a Kerala University. Yet I live in hope.

I know I have come away from the track on which I started. But, before I return to it, I must say a few words on the Anappara scheme, even though, those not in the know of Cochin politics may accuse me of an irrelevant digression. It is not so, however. It was a vital move for the ordered progress of higher education in Cochin. The fact that that recommendation of the College Committee report was not acted up to will ever remain a serious blot in the administration of that good and conscientious Diwan, Mr. Herbert. For those few who privately put him on the wrong path, for reasons known to them, will remain unknown, as they in the light of subsequent events, would surely wish to hide their diminished heads in a cloud of oblivion.

In India, from ancient times, studies were conducted in secluded spots. There is a meaning in that procedure. For concentrating one's mind on studies, for research work, the formation of character in the impressionable age of adolescence, a sort of cloistered seclusion is found to be necessary. The decision to locate the College at Anappara was not the result of a fitful whim of a passing moment. It was the result of deliberate consideration both of the Government and of the people. For a residential college, with

quarters for students and professors, and with facilities for sports and games, and for the development and expansion even to the extent of being made the possible centre of a Kerala University, the First Grade College Committee suggested that Anappara would be an ideal site, as a College in such an attractive setting would have a refining and ennobling influence on young minds, which would then be undisturbed by the distractions and dissipations incidental to life in towns. This opinion had the backing of educational experts and of the Madras University. Before affiliation was granted to the First Grade College by the Madras University, its Commission inspected the existing college. That body said that the present site of the College would not retain its advantage when the Cochin Harbour would be developed, and that, in any case, it would not permit of extensions on any large scale. The Commission examined the Anappara site and wrote, "We have examined the place and we have no hesitation in stating that it will form a magnificent setting for a college or a group of colleges." Thus the Anappara scheme is the outcome of a long careful investigation and deliberate and anxious consideration both of the official and of the non-official world in the State and of expert opinion from outside as well. On the basis of that scheme, four costly blocks of hostels were also completed. It was at this juncture that, on a sudden and clever move of some, Mr. Herbert was prevailed upon to drop the scheme altogether. These in my view have done the greatest disservice to the cause of higher education in Cochin.

Now to return to my original path. "In the morning at 8.30, on 29.10.1933 (the day after the Senate meeting), it is proposed to hold, in the Pachaiyappa's College Hall, a meeting of those who stand for a Kerala University, to concert measures to realise that end. Those who sympathise with the object of

the meeting are requested kindly to attend it." This notice was issued in the names of Mr. A. V. Kuttikrishna Menon, Rev. Fr. J. Palocaran, Mr. E. S. Ananthanarayana Iyer and myself. The *Hindu* of 29-10-1933 was kind enough to publish a brief summary of the proceedings of the meeting, which I shall quote here:

"UNIVERSITY OF KERALA. *A Madras Meeting.* A representative gathering of residents of Kerala met this morning in the Pachaiyappu's College with Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon of Ernakulam in the chair, for the purpose of conceiving measures to establish a separate University for Kerala.

After an informal discussion, a number of resolutions were adopted. The first resolution urged the necessity and desirability of starting a University for Kerala.

By another resolution, the meeting resolved to appoint a strong committee, with the chairman as the convener, for devising ways and means to start a Kerala University, for satisfying the aims and aspirations of Kerala, for fostering her arts, industries, etc. and for establishing a technological institute attached to the said University.

The meeting further resolved to authorise the Committee to draft a questionnaire to collect necessary information, to draft the necessary bill and to take such other measures as it would be necessary in furtherance of the object.

The last resolution requested Sir C. Sankaran Nair to be the Chairman of the Committee."

The members of the Committee as constituted were:

1. Sir C. Sankaran Nair (Chairman)
2. Sry. V. K. Parakkutti Nethyaramma
3. Raja Vasudeva Raja
4. Sir M. Krishnan Nair
5. Sir C. V. Ananthakrishna Iyer
6. Sir K. Ramunni Menon

7. Dr. K. Krishnan Pandalai
8. H. H. Ravi Varma, B.A., B.L. (subjudge)
9. Rev. Fr. J. Pulacuran
10. Mr. R. M. Palat
11. " K. T. Chandu Nambiyar (Advocate)
12. " B. Pokar
13. " A. V. Kuttikrishna Menon
14. " C. J. Varkey
15. " C. Krishnan B.A., B.L., (Rao Sahib)
16. " P. K. Narayana Pillai
17. " Changanassery Parameswaran Pillai
18. " Malloor Govinda Pillai
19. H. H. Ravi Varma Appan Thampuran
20. Mr. Ullur Parameswara Iyer (Rao Sahib)
21. " A. M. Varkey
22. " K. C. Manian Mappilay
23. " S. K. Subramanya Iyer
24. " K. Chandu (Councillor of Mysore)
25. " C. Mathai
26. " A. Sivarama Menon
27. " T. K. Krishna Menon (Convenor)
28. " P. V. Seshu Iyer
29. " M. Govindan.

On being written to, of these, only Sir C. S. Nair, regretfully expressed his inability to shoulder the burdens of the chairmanship of the Committee. But he remained as a member of the Committee. Along with the constitution of this Committee, a small working Committee also was selected. Its members were Messrs. C. Mathai, S. K. Subramanya Iyer, A. V. Kuttikrishna Menon, A. M. Varkey, and T. K. Krishna Menon (Convenor).

A few extracts from a few of the several letters received by me on the subject at about this time are worth recording.

Lanark Hall,
Randall's Road,
Vepery, 4th April 1937.

My Dear Friend,

In answer to the invitation to the meeting of the Kerala University Committee, convened for 8th April, I am afraid that, on account of urgent pre-engagements, I will not be able to attend.

Let me add my general view that the announcement of a Travancore University does not in any view much affect the need for a cultural institution which will appeal to the whole of the Malayalam speaking people. So little is now known about the Travancore proposal that it is possible only to say that, as no one can prevent Travancore doing what the authorities there decide to do for its own people, the authorities and people of Cochin and Malabar are in a similar position. In a matter like this, desire for cultural unity springing from the numerous bonds of language, civilization, arts and mixture of population, administrative rivalries cannot raise a permanent barrier. We must wait for the development of the Travancore institution and carry on the work of educating the mind of the educated public which I am convinced will support the All-Kerala University even if Travancore is now to have a University of its own. I do not enlarge on my view in this note, as the reason which occurs to me lie on the surface and must be familiar to you.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. S. Pandalai.

Mr. K. C. Maman Mappilai (2-11-1933). "I was so glad that you have taken up the Kerala University scheme. May I offer you my whole-hearted support?"

Mr. A. M. Varkey (10-11-1933). "I am glad to know that you have been able to constitute such a strong committee. I shall be glad to help in any way I can both on the working committee and also on the general committee."

Mr. P. V. Seshu Iyer (12-11-1933). "I shall be glad to serve on the Committee for a Kerala University. . . . I wish all success to the attempt for a Kerala University."

Mr. K. T. Chandu Nambiyar (14-11-1933). "I shall be very happy to serve on the Committee."

Mr. Changanassery Parameswaran Pillai (17-11-1933). "I thank you very much for electing me a member of the Kerala University Committee, and I shall be very glad to serve on it."

Mr. Mulloor Govinda Pillai (20-11-1933). "Thanks much for your letter. I feel happy to be able to assure you that I shall co-operate with you in your endeavours in connection with the Kerala University. You know I have been agitating for it during the past many years."

Mr. Ullur Parameswara Iyer. "As for the Committee mentioned in your letter, I shall gladly be a member of it."

Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai (16-12-1933). "If you want my services as a member of the University committee, you may put me down as a member by all means. Neither have I any objection to the drafting of a constitution by a few friends selected for the purpose. The scheme so prepared, I fear, would take time to bear fruit on account of growing economic depression. Anyhow, there is no harm in being ready with a scheme."

When, on 25-11-1933, the Working Committee met at Trichur, the following resolutions were passed:

(1) That the University be organised as a Federal University comprehending all the colleges already at work in the area.

(2) That the administrative offices of the University be located at some central place like Alwaye, Chalakudy, Adoor, or Shoranur, or some other suitable place, and that research laboratories, new faculties not yet opened in any of the colleges, University Library etc. be developed in that centre.

(3) That Mr. C. Mathai be responsible for drafting a Bill indicating the lines on which the University is to be organised, for discussion by the larger Committee, and after its approval to be placed before the public.

(4) That Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon be responsible for drawing up a memorandum indicating the necessity for developing a University for Kerala as a whole and of the urgency of all the three units of Kerala agreeing to the lines on which such a University is to be developed.

The larger Committee for the preparation of the draft bill was already constituted by the Madras meeting. The memorandum and bill were got ready as per the above directions.

One meeting of the Kerala University Committee was held at Trivandrum on 24-4-1935. One of the important resolutions passed at that meeting was this:

That each of the three governments be approached by a deputation consisting of the members of the Committee belonging to the State concerned and at least one from each of the other two, in order to impress on the Governments (a) the need of a Kerala University, (b) the distinctive contribution which such a University will be able to make to the cultural and industrial development of Kerala, and (c) the desirability of the appointment of a three-state-committee to work out a practical scheme.

In pursuance of this resolution, "On Friday, 6-12-1935, a deputation of the Kerala University Committee, consisting of Messrs. A.V.K. Menon, Changanassery Parameswaran Pillai, M. Govindan, Mallur

Govinda Pillai and Mahakavi Ullur S. Parameswara Iyer waited upon Sir M. Habibulla, the Diwan of Travancore. I am quoting from a cutting from a paper which I got from a member of the deputation. The deputation presented a copy of the memorandum on the subject to the Diwan and requested for the appointment of an official Committee representing the Durbars of Cochin and Travancore and the Madras Government to investigate the practicability of establishing a separate University for Kerala. The Diwan promised to find out a way to proceed to ascertain the attitude of the Madras Government regarding the appointment of the committee. The interview lasted about 45 minutes. The Diwan also promised to consider the attitude his government will have to take up at his earliest convenience.

But the official reply received by the deputation was not of an encouraging nature.

Huzoor Cutchery,

Trivandrum, 18th March 1936.

D. Dis. No. 1420 of 36 Edn.

From

The Chief Secretary to the Government of
Travancore.

To

Changanassery Parameswaran Pillai Esq., B.A., B.L.,

Retired High Court Judge, Trivandrum.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Government have perused the memorandum on the Kerala University presented by the deputation of the Kerala University Committee which met the Diwan on the 6th December 1935. This Government feel that conditions are not favourable for their taking the initiative; and they consider that it will be advantageous if the Committee first ascertain the views of the Madras and

Cochin Governments who are also interested in the question.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Sd. Kunjan Pillai

Chief Secretary to Government.

When the Committee found that Travancore was forging ahead with its scheme for a Travancore University, it decided to address His Excellency the Governor of Madras to help them in their programme of work. Accordingly, a deputation waited on His Excellency at Calicut on 7-11-1936, and submitted a memorial to him, which was signed by Raja Vasudeva Raja, Dr. K. Krishnan Pandalai, Mr. R. M. Palat, Mr. B. P. K. and Mr. A. V. Kuttikrishnan Menon. That document is worthy of being recorded here; so too its reply.

May it please Your Excellency,

We thank Your Excellency for granting us this opportunity of placing our representation before you.

We are the representatives of the Kerala University Committee, a non-official body of educated and public men of the three divisions, namely, Malabar, Cochin and Travancore, which together make up what is popularly known as Kerala. This body was formed in October 1933 to focus public opinion in all the above divisions of Kerala on the subject of Kerala University. The need for such an institution has long been felt and public opinion has expressed itself in many ways. But the administrative difficulty due to the fact that there are three Governments in Kerala has been the chief obstacle to a practical solution. In order to find such a solution and with that view, to approach the authorities of the three Governments, a Committee was established. A delegation of this Committee was able to meet the Diwan of Travancore and place the matter before him on the 6th December.

His reply was to the effect that, owing to the position of the respective Governments, the Travancore Government felt reluctant to take the initiative in the matter and wanted to know the views of the other Governments.

In the representation made to the Diwan of Travancore of which printed copies have been submitted for Your Excellency's use, the history of this question is dealt with in sufficient detail, making it unnecessary for us to go over the same ground. The question is by no means new. It has been considered, though indirectly, by two Committees appointed by the Travancore Government in 1917 and 1923 and by a Committee appointed by the Cochin Government in 1924. These Committees were strongly of opinion that the only proper way of satisfying a demand for a University for the West Coast of this Presidency would be to establish a Kerala University.

To the information contained in the printed memorandum, we beg to add this. Kerala, including Travancore, Cochin and Malabar, covers an area of nearly 15,000 sq. miles and has a fairly homogeneous population of over 10 millions. In this area are located 16 colleges, 14 arts Colleges, 1 law college and 1 training college -- all of them at present affiliated to the Madras University. These colleges have all reached that standard of efficiency necessary to fit them to become the nucleus of a new University. When, in 1916, the Mysore University was established, there were only two Colleges in the Mysore State affiliated to the Madras University but it was felt that the time had come to effect certain changes with a view to adapting the educational system to the needs of the Mysoreans. When in 1926, the Andhra University was established, there were only 7 or 8 colleges to start with. There is also the fact that the work of the Madras University has been steadily increasing

and consequently, it is not able to attend to and afford facilities for the development of the language and literature, of the culture and traditions, of the arts and crafts, of Kerala.

When Your Excellency has visited the places which your present programme includes, we who belong to all the divisions of Kerala trust that you will be convinced of the unity of life, both physical and spiritual, of the ten million subjects of His Majesty who inhabit this coast. Our language is the same, our dresses and homes are similar, and our traditions, notwithstanding religious differences, include in their forefront our deep and passionate love of our homeland. Wherever else we go for pleasure or profit, we always go, register in the name of our motherland, and look upon our institutions with pride and affection. Your Excellency will be pleased to note that it is a land, not only of religion and piety, but also of culture and knowledge. We have ventured to approach Your Excellency for your helpful hand and guidance in achieving an object which has been near our hearts for many decades, namely, the foundation of an institution which shall be the symbol of United Kerala and shall call forth the finest efforts of the ideal of service, learning and love to which the people of Kerala are now as ever devoted.

Your Excellency has been called upon to guide our destinies through a critical period of our political development. The difficulties hitherto considered insurmountable, the interests hitherto deemed irreconcilable, will be dissolved in the great federation of India. May we hope that the obstacles, administrative and financial, in the way of establishing a Kerala University will, with Your Excellency's sympathy, be similarly overcome and that the ten million people for whom we speak may look forward to the term of Your Excellency's office as that in which the

first practical step was taken to give shape and fruition to their long felt desire?

We beg to remain,
Your Excellency's most obedient
servants,

7th November 1936.

Sd. Vasudeva Raja
K. K. Pandarai
R. M. Palat
B. Paker
A. V. Kuttikrishna Menon.

Government House,
Madras, 30th January 1937.

Dear Mr. Kuttikrishna Menon,

Your letter of the 26th.

I am afraid that it is not usual for official replies to be sent from here to deputations received by His Excellency. Moreover, you will remember that His Excellency told your deputation at Calicut that the question of the establishment of a Mineral university was one which must be left to the new Government, which would come into existence under the Reforms from the 1st April next, to go into. The existing Government naturally cannot at this juncture commit the future Government to a scheme involving considerable expenditure such as this, and on all matters relating to education His Excellency will be bound to follow the advice of his Ministers. It will therefore be for you to canvas public opinion and persuade the future Ministry to take up the scheme.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. Private Secretary.

M. R. Ry., A. V. Kuttikrishna Menon, A/L.

Principal, Zamorin's College, Calicut.

The last meeting of the Committee was held at Ernakulam, on Thursday the 8th of April 1937, in the Sircar T. B. (opposite Diwan's House), to consider

what steps should be taken in the light of the announcement of the starting of a Travancore University. At that meeting it was decided, as a last measure, to address His Excellency the Viceroy on the subject. The prepared draft of the memorial was approved by the Committee. It was also resolved to appoint Mr. A. V. Kuttikrishna Menon as the convener of the Committee as I prayed, after four years, that I might be relieved of the work. The Committee sat long, and soon after their deliberations were over, they had an interview with the Diwan of Cochin who warmly espoused our case, and said that he was prepared to assist us in all possible ways. This is the copy of the above memorial, to which so far as I know no answer was vouchsafed.

Dated 5th of April '37.

His Excellency the Most Honourable

The Marquess of Linlithgow, P.C., K.T.,

G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., O.B.E., D.L., T.D.

May it please Your Excellency,

1. We, a few representatives from Travancore, Cochin and British Malabar, beg leave to appeal to Your Excellency to be so pleased to advise the Government of Travancore to explore the possibility of starting an All-Kerala University before they start a purely Travancore University.

2. The term Kerala includes British Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. These territories lie contiguous; and they are, so to say, one from linguistic, cultural and several other points of view. The demand for an all-Kerala University is not a new one. Throughout Kerala, the educated public, the press and the platform have been practically unanimous in its emphatic expression for an all-Kerala University.

3. In 1923, the Government of Travancore appointed an influential, important and representative

Committee to report on the feasibility of providing a University for Travancore. In its report, these relevant remarks occupy a conspicuous place: "We also feel that it would be most desirable from an educational point of view -- we might go further and say, from every point of view -- that the new University should embrace, from the commencement, the area composed of Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. We consider it, therefore, to be of importance that, *before* starting a University, His Highness' Government should ascertain the possibility of securing the immediate co-operation, on reasonable terms, of the Governments of Cochin and British Malabar, in initiating an All-Kerala University in which Travancore would be assigned its due position." It further states, "A start has to be made in negotiation before a Kerala University can be formed Travancore might, therefore, find it both wise and expedient to make the start. It could hardly be blamed for taking the initiative."

4. In the fifth chapter of the above Report, the need for a University is clearly set forth. The penultimate paragraph of that chapter is to this effect: "In point of linguistic, social and cultural unity, and the possession of common traditions stretching over centuries, Kerala could compare with advantage, as has already been pointed out, with any other part of India." United, Kerala will stand; but, divided, as the Travancore University will force it to, it will fall. It is in the light of these circumstances, that we humbly make this fervent, urgent prayer, which we trust Your Excellency will be graciously pleased to respond.

We have the honour to be,
May it please Your Excellency,
Your Excellency's most obedient servants,
(True copy)

So long as I live, I shall think of it, and work for it. Despair, that word is not in my dictionary. Faith in God and in the success of all good and just causes, that will stimulate my work.

XIII. MY DAYS FOR LITERATURE.

I believe I first imbibed my taste for Sanskrit and Malayalam literatures from my mother and sisters; Mr. Damodarar Nampūtiripad, the Malayalam Munshi of the Kurchi Vidyasala, and Asan Madhava Kurup of Thiruvur, had it nourished and developed in me. To my brother and my master I owe my love for English literature. I always had an eagerness to read books; in fact, I do not remember a time when I did not like to read books. I never liked to be idle; and I rarely slept in the day-time. So, I could easily find time to satisfy my desire. I am myself simply amazed at the number of books I had read. By way of illustration, I shall just gather together the names of some books that I read in 1918. I take the year by mere chance. *What are I Theosophist* by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater, *Mother and Daughter*, an English rendering of a Bengali novel, Bryce on *Modern Democracies*, Morley's *Recollections*, Dicey's *Law and Public Opinion. Is India Civilised?* by Woodroffe, *Comparative Philology*, *Professional Ethics* by Justice Sundara Iyer, Sir Oliver Lodge's *Raymond-Up from Slavery* by Booker Washington, Asquith's *Occasional Addresses*, Gardiner's *War Lords*, *Karya-Mimamsa* of Rajasekhara, Prof. Raleigh's books on the *English Novel* and on *Stevenson*. Besides these, I had to read books in connection with my work on the Nayar Regulation Committee, and as a lawyer.

Fortunately, I was early given by my revered master clear advice on the choice of books and the mode of reading them. The chapters on this subject in Todd's *Student's Manual* and Davenport Adam's *Plain Living and High Thinking*, and, later on, Frederic Harrison's *Choice of Books* have also considerably helped me in that direction. I never galloped through books, nor engaged myself in abutlerly flirtation with them. I am a slow reader; and, instead of skipping from one to another, I carefully finished one book before I started with another. I read books with a dictionary by my side; and, if that, by itself, could not clear my difficulty, I had it removed by some one who was able to do so. I tried to be benefited by my reading by stocking my mind with fine images, lofty conceptions, and the artistry of words. I took notes of them, where needed.

Preferences:—there were in the selection of books, but no exclusions. To whatever department of knowledge they belonged, they were welcome to me, provided their perusal was instructive and interesting. A book should help us at least to enjoy life or to endure it, I suppose. No doubt, as I grew old, my taste narrowed. But zeal, style and solid contents, these I always liked. The classics and the *Bluecoat Gesta* gave me a standard of values, and made me easily realise that, after all, noble books are our best friends. They lead us away from evil tongues and thoughts, the sneers of selfish man, from the mud and mire to a diviner air. Books are friends that never forsake us. They confer their treasured wisdom of the ages upon every devout disciple. As Crabbe says,

" Their aid they yield to all: they never shun
The man of sorrow or the wretch undone:
Unlike the hard, the selfish, and the proud,
They fly not, sullen, from the suppliant crowd,
Nor tell to various people various things,
But show to subjects what they show to kings."

My optional subject for my B.A. Degree examination was Science. So, I always took care to keep myself in touch, in a popular manner, with the latest developments in Chemistry and Physics. I also tried to have a nodding acquaintance with a few of the other branches of Science, such as Astronomy, Anthropology and Geology. I could not cultivate an absorbing fascination for romantic literature. Somehow, works of fiction were not able to make me their slave. Novels by Scott and Stevenson, and a few of Dickens, Hardy and George Eliot, I used to read now and again. I am not very much attracted by the modern set. Except a hollow momentary enjoyment, you gain nothing by wasting your time over many works of fiction. For the lives of great men and women I have the greatest respect; in their perusal I derive infinite pleasure. They serve as models for us to follow. Biographical study, according to me, is at once the most interesting and the most profitable application to books in which we can engage. Very few books possess the charm that a moving account of a life has for us. Rightly, Carlyle maintained that "History was, at bottom, nothing but the lives of great men." "The history of mankind is the history of its great men." These show what result such lives have produced on the welfare of the world. Hence they become landmarks in the progress of the world, and remain as forces in some new way to the everlasting gain of humanity. Such honour have all those who have served mankind in their day and generation faithfully.

It should not be understood that I disparage romantic literature, or let down the value of novels, even though Frederic Harrison states that "black night will cover the bulk of modern fiction, works as perishable as the generations whose idleness it has amused." If fiction rests and diverts you after an exhausting toil, follow it; but see you rise from the

time-killing level to appreciate the work of masters.

This is a reading age. One must admit it. But, at the same time, one cannot close one's eyes to the fact that, generally, the reading public has a keener relish for literary digests and spicy paragraphs of society gossip than for the precious treasures of our literary heritage. Again, the claims of the household and the need to master a trade to earn a living, throws into the shade all ideas of high culture. So, it is of the utmost importance to begot a healthy appetite for ennobling literature.

All along I have been a *homo-woorshipper*; and I feel I am the better for it. Among poets, I like Shakespeare, Tennyson and Goldsmith best. To the last a sort of silent, deep sympathy flows from my heart. His *Kear of Waverley* has been a favourite of mine from my Fifth Form. But I got a slight dislike for it when I had to read it as a text for my P. A. examination. I got over that feeling soon after. I am immensely fond of works on subjects connected with archaeology, and I highly relish research work under that head.

For my inordinate avidity for reading biographical literature, I used to be taunted by some friends. What was my relief then to realise that Gladstone, Morley and Asquith had a partiality for that. Similarly, they came to my help in another controversy. I used to say that, among Scott's novels, *Bride of Lammermoor* is the best; while others stood for *Ivanhoe* and the *Heart of Midlothian* and so on. A few of these had to revise their decision when they found that the three above were on my side. During my college days, healthy discussions among studious friends on points like these stimulated our taste for critical reading.

To form a style and to improve it, I was advised to read the Bible, works of Milton, Goldsmith, Addison, Defoe and Swift, and Bright's speeches. These

I read with care and enthusiasm. Works of Huxley, Morley and Stevenson also I found helpful, of the last particularly. In style Goldsmith stands unsurpassed. But, to own a truth, I was greatly struck with the writings of Fardley Norton. Notes, grave and gay, he can dexterously strike like a master, and with consummate felicity. No wonder. The printed catalogue of his general library was as large as the 20th century Chamber's Dictionary. And he had made good use of his books.

I do not think it is necessary to list here the names of the great books I have read. It is practically impossible also. They will include not a small number of the books in the Egnakulam and Trichur Public Libraries and in the Presidency College Library. For research work I got much help from the Coimbatore Public Library in Madras, the Rama Varma Research Institute Library of Trichur, and the Library in the office of the Government of India Epigraphist at Ootacamund.

There is a saying like this: He is a fool who lends books; but a greater fool is he who returns them. I regret to have to note that I have not acted up to the practical wisdom of this saying. Students, friends and others have always had the free run of my library. But I insisted on their timely return. Similarly, I have taken loan of books from others, and scrupulously returned them in good time.

From my fourteenth year I began to form a library of my own. I had a passion for good books, and not a small sum have I spent on them. My library became so unwieldy that it became a problem for my wife and myself as to how to contain all my *almirahs* in our small house. So we made up our minds to hand a great number of books in English, Malayalam and Sanskrit over to the Government. This we did during the Diwanship of Mr. C. G. Herbert. (Vide

Order, Development Department, R. Dis. 1409/1109, dated 29th January 1934). He was so generous as to receive the books and almirahs and to safely house them in the Museum buildings at Trichur. The above order also contains the rules for the maintenance of the institution. My friend, Mr. K. Kochu Govinda Maray, the then Superintendent of the Museum, got the Diwan's permission to have the Library opened by Rao Sahib, Mahakavi Sahityabhushanan Ullur S. Parameswara Iyer and to have it formally named as *Krishna-Kalyani Library and Free Reading Room*. Another substantial addition of books and almirahs was made to it then, and Mr. Dixon had the library kindly removed to a nicer place than before, so that the public may have easy access to it, and convenient seating arrangements for comfortable reading. (Vida Order—D2—14109/17, dated 23-1942). I record my gratitude to the Government and to those two Diwans. I owe to my young friend, Mr. M. Govindankutty Menon, M.A., the present Superintendent, to say that he takes a personal interest in the proper upkeep of the library.

"Reading maketh a full man, writing an exact man." So Bacon has said. Even before I heard this dictum and understood its correct import, I had begun to try my hand at writing. I began my training in the *Kerala Nandini* a Malayalam weekly in the conduct of which H. H. The Elaya Raja whose demise took place at Trinjalakunday, and my brother were taking a great interest. My brother asked me to assist it with articles; devotion and duty made me obey him. I had even to edit it for a month or two when its editor, the poet Chathankutty Mannathay, went to his native place during a midsummer recess. On another occasion, I had to serve the poet as a critic. At that time, he carefully revised my articles and helped me with valuable suggestions in the art of Malayalam composition. There came into being

two rival renderings of Bhavabhuti's *Uttararama-charitam*. Into the genesis of these it is profitless to enter at this distant date. But, at the time of their publication, controversies raged round them. One was by Mr. Mannatiar and the other by a coterie of poets directed by Mr. C. Achyuta Menon. Each side had a following, and between the rival parties a wordy warfare went on for some time. Mine was a peaceful mission, though I was, at heart, decidedly on the side of Mr. Mannatiar's work. For, there was no doubt that, on the whole, his version was eminently superior to the other. With the poet I read the two translations with the original and made my notes. It was an education to me, and this drama appealed to my heart more than *Sakuntalam*. The sense of pity I have for Goldsmith I feel for poor Bhavabhuti too. In my mind's vision, I see him going about, in his tattered robes and with a torn palmyra umbrella, in search of a patron for his immortal drama which, in a shred of faded cloth, he has secured in his arm-pit. Today, the whole literary world will be at his feet; but, then, there was none so poor to do him honour. Those were glorious days to me when I had the privilege of reading the whole work with the poet Mannatiar. I always liked and followed the rule of early to bed and early to rise; but the work so charmed me that, for a whole month, I daily sat up late at night. I wrote ten articles; they covered only two acts of the drama. After that, I had to drop the project as it interfered with my college studies. My attempt was to show the beauties of the original and the defects in the renderings. I felt happy when I found that no one suspected me as the author of these articles, which appeared in a Calicut weekly. Even while I was a college student at Ernakulam, I had to write to the *Cochin Argus* and the *Western Star*. There was in my class one Mr. Peraisra, a son of the proprietor of the *Argus*, who, afterwards,

retired as a Civil Surgeon in the British Service; while, with Mr. H. W. M. Brown, the editor of the *Star*, I became acquainted as the brother of the *Firebrand*. Both these would now and again insist on my contributing to their papers. Once Mr. Pereira forced me to review the Report of Administration of the Cochin State. Here I took counsel of Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon and Mr. Nallanat Narayana Menon. At Madras, Mr. G. P. Pillai, the editor of the *Madras Standard*, and myself were so intimate as friends that my services he could always command. I have reviewed several books for him, and contributed a few articles to his paper. For a few months I had even to assist him in editing it. Journalism was thus a pleasant episode in my life. I think journalism has a great future for it in our State. It is the duty of the intelligent and educated public to guide it on proper lines. Journalism can mould public opinion; it can even create healthy literature by timely criticism. Further, "Out of journalism at times literature grows. It is a craft that has to be studied as well as practised. At times, it reaches out, a good deal touches, some definitely enters the sphere of literature. That sphere is not bounded by any definite line." On 1-11-1936, I invited the journalists in and nearabout Ernakulam to have tea with me. Then I outlined a plan for the formation of an all-Cochin Journalists' Association as a means to improve their equipment and status. To this end I tried to do my bit in the universities of Madras and Travancore.

Mr. C. Karunakara Menon, who edited the *Hindu* for a long time, was also a friend of mine. When he severed his connection with the *Hindu*, he started the *Indian Patriot*. Here is a letter which he wrote to me soon after he took up the editorship of *The Hindu*, that well-known, valuable daily paper.

The Hindu Office,
Mount Road,
Madras, 21st October 1989.

My Dear Friend,

I am very much obliged to you for your very kind letter and for the very appreciative terms in which you refer to me. I know that the satisfaction of my being the Editor of the *Hindu* is not confined to myself alone, and I shall do my best not to disappoint you of your expectations I personally regret Mr. Subramania Iyer's severance; for I have worked with him for the last ten years and would be glad to continue my association with him. Ever since he went to England, I have been conducting the *Hindu* except at short intervals; and I am therefore accustomed to the heavy responsibility.

With best regards,

I am,
Yours sincerely,

Sd. C. Karunakara Menon.

Mr. G. Subramania Iyer was a great and bold man. He worked not a little to raise the tone of Indian Journalism to a very high level. He wrote and spoke English with the ease and piquancy of a cultured Englishman. Once when he spoke before the Presidency College Literary Union, he created quite an outburst of laughter when he said — and acted it — that a local contemporary described him as 'a leviathan disporting in the stormy waters of India's politics.' Mr. Karunakara Menon followed closely the footsteps of his great predecessor. His *Indian Patriot* too was a high class newspaper. It was from the office of that paper that I came to know Mr. S. Renga Iyer who assisted Mr. Menon in editing the *Patriot*. To be an all round journalist, he was well-equipped, and the training he had under such a veteran stood him in good stead in after years. For,

after he left the *Patriot*, he became the Secretary to the Nabha Ruler, and, when that Maharaja was, for political reasons, deported, he went to New Delhi and edited the *Roy's Weekly* for some years. Subsequently, he was appointed as the Publicity Officer of the Mysore State. He died in harness. Wherever he went, he gained a name for hard, honest work. We were friends. He wrote to me occasionally. I shall give below extracts from a few of his letters.

On the eve of the retirement of Sir A. R. Banerji from the Diwanship of Cochin, half-a-dozen malcontents tried to belittle his administration and to create an unwelcome scene at the public meeting held to consider how to honour him. The *Indian Patriot*, not being conversant with Cochin politics, lent its columns to the dissatisfied few. I wrote to Mr. Renga Iyer about that conduct of his paper. These lines are from his reply. "21-2-1914 As for the *Indian Patriot*, it has always been of no party. Its editorial columns have borne testimony to Mr. Banerji's worth. But correspondents must be allowed their say The *Indian Patriot* will write an article next Saturday, February 28, about Mr. Banerji. It will be laudatory, because he has done well The meeting misrepresentations are set at right by two articles appearing today. When respectable people write falsehoods, gods must weep!"

When, on the staff of the *Roy's Weekly*, its Proprietor wanted to reduce the pay of the staff. Mr. Renga Iyer said that he would clear out. He was too good to be left off; so he remained on better terms, I was afterwards told. This letter shows his keen sense of duty; he was busy planning things for the betterment of his organ even after the order of retrenchment.

Delhi,

17-2-1933.

My Dear Sir,

I am grateful for your letter. It is just like you, so good and kind and gracious to one who, as a school-boy, looked up to you as my ideal.

I drifted from Nabha in 1924 to Journalism; then, from 1926 to 1930, was Foreign Secretary to Maharaja of — (I cannot spell out the word) (Oludr or so), visiting Europe, Africa, Central Asia; and till August 1932 was Secretary to the Prime Minister of Kashmir.

The axe drove me off — and I am practically retired. Younger men must oust a fossil like me.

I have put through this paper — but my contract expires on 31-3-'33 — as I cannot do honorary work

I have built a house in Oorakam, near Trichur. My children are studying there. Their grandfather was a schoolmaster there. I have, thank God, enough to keep the pot boiling.

That exhausts my story — a struggle for bread!

Please do not go out of the way to get us a correspondent, as, being a weekly, we want only *criticism*. One from you for our *Federation* page on Cochin would have been priceless — with your photo. For you are the Father of Cochin Political Life. Is it too late?

This week Mr. Krishnamachari of Baroda writes; last week Sir A. Hydari wrote. Why not you oblige your boy? Do.

Yours very sincerely,

Sd. S. Renga Iyer.

I sent him the wanted article.

Roy's Weekly,
Irwin Road, New Delhi,
10th August 1937.

My dear Sir,

It was so good of you to give me an opportunity to show my devotion to you by sending the review of the book to me — in what other way can I show the admiration and respect and awe I felt towards you while I was a boy in the College? God bless you.

I am not surprised that it was a labour of love with you. If only you had lived outside the wall that Cochin is! But your reward is in the work itself — I know that.

My son is now in the Loyala College — an Honours student in Economics I was in Ooty and saw the room in the Modern Munda Hotel where you stayed. I was returning from Mysore in Ooty just to see you; and you had gone. My daughters were thrilled by the kindly way you spoke to them while in their village.

Yours very sincerely,

Sd. S. Ranga Iyer,

My wife and myself, on our return from Tripurayar and Pazhuvam temples, went to see Mr. Ranga Iyer's wife and children in his Oorakum house. The review referred to is that of *The Pathfinder*, a life of Sri Sasipada Banerji by his son Sir A. R. Banerji. It was sent to me by the author for my remarks.

The last letter I got from Mr. Ranga Iyer was dated 30-12-1940 from Bangalore, where he then was the Publicity Officer to the Mysore Government.

"Your letter is always a reflection of your great mind, and I feel like a student in III Form, eating refreshments in the party on your honour when you got the F. R. H. S.

"I read in the papers about the event, and my wife, my son and myself sent forth our prayers for

your long life and happiness, as also of Sy. Kalyani Amma — another name which is a household word".

"So God make the Diwan of Cochin His instrument for the use of talents He has given. Only, I wonder why some honorarium should not follow. Perhaps there is the fear that you may feel insulted."

"..... I send you the books we have published. Do you get our monthly bulletin? If not, I shall send it."

Yours very respectfully,

Sd. S. Itenga Iyer.

When the *Hindu* changed hands, there was to me a letter from (Sir) K. Ramunni Menon from Madras, to sound if I could be its correspondent.

19-7-1906. The Editor of the *Hindu* wants a well-informed Cochin correspondent. I do not know whether you would find the time or the inclination for the work. If not, whether you could think of anybody who would be likely to meet the requirements. I regretfully declined the offer and could not suggest any other name. Mr. V. R. Karandikar tried his utmost to net me as the Cochin Correspondent for Mrs. Besant's *New India*. I managed to wriggle out of it, though with difficulty. Later still, Mr. K. Ramunni Menon wanted me to be the Editor-in-chief of the *Savathana Hindu*; of course to that request too I could not respond.

But there were frequent requests from friends for contributions, which I could not by any means refuse. Two or three specimens of such requisitions I shall here transcribe, not in their originals, which I have preserved in a file, but, to spare space, in a free English garb.

Malayala Manorama Co. Ltd.

Kottayam, 20-10-1894.

The reason why I resigned the Secretaryship of the Bhasha Poshini Sabha is to get me more leisure

to conduct my press and paper. For this the assistance of persons like you is very necessary. Though you may be busy otherwise, I request you to kindly send me an article every month Though you may be pressed with studies for your examination yet I think it will take only such time as will be needed to write a letter.

(Sd.) K. V. Varugese Mappilay.

Mullashery,
16th April 1901.

My dear Menon,

. I again take the liberty of requesting you to contribute to the *Sawhary* at least occasionally. I know perfectly well that you, a busy man, cannot devote much time for things like this. But I need not remind you that you owe some duties to the public also. Your valuable contributions will go a great way to make our paper more popular

Yours ever sincerely,

Sd. C. Krishnan.

Mr. C. Krishnan, B. A., B. L., an old college friend of mine, was afterwards the Editor of the *Madras* and a member of the Madras Legislative Council. After we left college, we met, after several years, in 1930 July only. In August he wrote to me: "Your visit served to er wd into my mind the pleasant memories of the jolly good days we passed in Madras. I was glad to note that absolutely no change has come over you in appearance and spirit. I wish you will preserve them for very many years to come."

The *Kerala Sawhary* had also another claim on me, because it was the organ started by my dear friend, Mr. Vengalil Kunhi Raman Nayanar. The first two, the middle two and the last two letters of the name of the paper will spell *Rasari* which was Mr. Nayanar's pseudonym.

I believe, it is about this time that I was connected with another weekly called *Chakrasarthi*, published from Cochin. Mr. Marayil Krishna Menon and myself were on the Board of management of the press and paper. It was, more or less, at the pressure of one Mr. C. Kunjan Menon that we happened to take an interest in these. I had not to give much of literary help to that paper. Nor did I link myself with the board for a long time. When I found its politics not to my taste, I cleared out of the whole show. With monthlies, as they were devoted to literature and not to politics, my connection was congenial and close.

I shall start with *Ramanujan*, as it is named after Ezhuthaccan, the father of modern Malayalam poetical literature. This is a letter from my friend Vallathol, the great poet, its editor, asking my help for the organ, and a contribution for its first number.

Trichur,

11-3-1882

When not even competent to be a contributor to a monthly, I have taken upon my head the editorship of this monthly. What prompted me to do so is the firm belief that I shall have the generous and uninterrupted support of persons like you. The manager of *Ramanujan* comes to you for getting an article for the first number. I pray to you to kindly comply with our request. I also do not hide the fact that we expect an article for every issue of this.

(Sd.) Vallathol N. Menon

The monthly did not live long. I had to write only one article for it. The poet Mr. Kunhi Kuttan Tampuran had published an article about Ramanujan Ezhuttaccan in the *Ravikaranjini*. It damned the father of modern Malayalam poetical literature with faint praise. I thought *Ramanujan* must refute it, and so wrote a reply to it. It had its desired object. Many wrote to thank me for it. The poet himself

had to confess his admiration for that poet and his inadvertance to his mistaken language. Here is one from Mr. K. Chandu Menon, the son of Mr. O. Chandu Menon, the novelist. He was not then personally known to me.

Thomason College,
Roorkee, 10-2-'07.

Dear Sir,

Please allow me to congratulate you on your brilliant article in the *Ramayan* against the thoughtless insolence of that writer in *Rasikaranjini* Thanking you for the service you have done to us all.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Sd. K. Chandu Menon.

The Honorary Editor of the *Sunday Chronicle*, Dewan Bahadur M. K. Reldi wrote to me, on 14-1-1913, a letter for a message for the first issue of his weekly. To that, I sent this letter to him:

"I thank you for the honour you do me in inviting me to send a message for publication in your new weekly. Let the *Sunday Chronicle* stand for a decent Democracy, and oppose the coming in of its counterfeit which would mean the rule of the autocrat who will not consult nor be guided by his peers. Let it stand for a Social Reform which is to be evolved without irritation, and will be fruitful of good to the country. Let it work for the Economic Uplift of the people, at least by educating them to endure the depression with boldness. May God bless the new comer and direct it on proper lines." I believe Mr. K. V. Menon had something to do with this. At any rate, when he edited the *Cochin Chronicle*, he used to ask for "and take" articles for it from me.

When the present owner took up the *Cochin Arrow*, I wrote the first leader for it, defining its boundaries and declaring its policy. Every now and

then he used to seek my help or advice, which I ever gave him without stint. For all that, he suddenly stopped the free copy of his paper he was sending me. I never asked for his reason, but only thanked him for his act. For, thereby, he freed me from the bondage of supplying him with articles for his annuals, his specials and birthday numbers. Increasing age and work I use as the shield to protect me from the innumerable appeals I get from several papers and magazines for articles of this sort.

With the request of the *Servant of India* weekly to review books for it, I willingly complied, out of the high regard in which I have always held Gokhale. And when it ceased to be published, its Editor sent me a handsome letter to acknowledge my services to that paper and to the Society. I valued that compliment.

"October 31, 1939. From 26th October the *Servant of India* has ceased publication. . . . And to you as one of our regular and prominent reviewers of books we beg to offer our most heartfelt thanks. We have given nothing else in return for your valuable services. Sd. S. G. Vaze, Editor."

This one from him of a previous date is about another matter.

"December 24, 1936. I can never forget, and the Society will always remember with gratitude, that it was due to your good offices that we have been able to get our Library placed on the free distribution list of the Cochin Government. We are in a deep debt of gratitude to you."

Of the origin of the *Makati*, its change of hands, and final disappearance I have already recorded in an early chapter. About the *Vidya Vinadini* too, the earliest monthly with which I was connected, I have written elsewhere. When Mr. C. Achyuta Menon was editing it, I had to write articles for it; and, on his

retirement from the editorship, his coercion, as that of an elder and well-wisher of mine, forced me to take up his place. I did so with considerable diffidence as I was a college student, and not fit to follow his footsteps. However, there were friends to assist me to maintain its high standard. Mr. P. Govindan Thampi, who was helping me, wrote to Mr. A. R. Raja Raja Varma for cooperation and guidance. "I have received", so Mr. Thampi wrote to me from Trichur to Madras, "a very encouraging note from Raja Raja Varma, M. A., Sanskrit College Principal, who speaks very highly of the Journal He says of you as one of the best scholars of our Vernacular who is still a staunch student and writer." Subsequently, I myself appealed to him to join me as a co-editor. To my letter of protest, he replied as follows: "11-11-99. As regards the co-editorship, I should be very glad to take an active part in the publication of your valuable magazine Though yours is but a purely literary journal, such a relation with it is hardly compatible with my official position Certain new organs are now deadly against me for favouring that young man of literary enterprise, K. Ramakrishna Pillai of Neyyattinkara, whom you have lately introduced to me Whatever work you want me to share with you on behalf of that worthy journal, I shall gladly take up and discharge privately." Mr. Ramakrishna Pillai also, in a letter of his of that time, dated 1074-9-2, refers to that fact.

"The root cause of the Glossary of scientific terms is your note which introduced me to that person. But for that, I would have been but a student of his. I tell you again with deep gratitude that it was your letter that enabled me to move with him intimately as a friend."

Though a profound scholar in Sanskrit, Malayalam and English, and loved to lift up Malayalam to a

high level, yet Mr. Rajaraja Varma had about him a tinge of indolence or inertia, what shall I call it, brought about by his aristocratic bringing-up. Some stimulus was necessary to overcome that. I wanted him to write a history of Malayalam literature, to prepare a glossary of scientific terms, and also to get ready for my "*Malayalam Science Primers Series*" a Primer on Astronomy. I knew he was the only scholar then living who was eminently fitted to undertake these three works. It was to stimulate and help him in these that I introduced this young scholar to him. My friend was then "occupied in writing an epic poem in Sanskrit" on the English Empire in India called *Angala-Samrajyam*. So he asked for time to take up the works suggested by me. But he fell in with my idea. "The proposed glossary is to be as comprehensive as possible." A notice about it was published in the *Malayala Mawarima* in Meenam 1974. He further wrote in that letter, "I quite agree with you in deeming a History of Malayalam literature a desideratum, and shall take a bold step in that direction, confiding in the strong co-operation of friends like you." It was only in Makaram 1975 that he again wrote to me on the subject. "All your letters along with the copy of the *Astronomy Primer* are duly to hand. You have rightly conjectured the cause of my silence The first business I would take up is the Prospectus of the Malayalam literature. The *Astronomy Primer* will be got ready so as to be published in parts in your *Vidya Vinodini*. The *Angala Samrajyam* has come out of the press."

Before I leave Mr. Ramakrishna Pillai, let me say a few words more about him. He became a good Malayalam scholar and gifted writer of prose in that language. But, as a journalist, he let off all caution to the winds. Though, in connection with the unpleasant and unwanted controversy over Pandit

Karuppan's *Balakalasan*, he virulently attacked me and the dramatist. I never took any notice of his conduct, but, like a good candid friend, distinctly warned him in the presence of his wife, when they once halted with me in Kumaralayam, that he might abuse manners but not men, might censure government but never the Ruler. Had he heeded my advice, he would never have been deported and could easily have arisen as a power to be reckoned with in the journalistic world of Travancore.

A letter from another helper, Mr. Kuchikudtan Tampuran of Cranganore, also will find an appropriate place here.

Cranganore,

8-2-1975.

"I got your letter; but I regret it may not be possible to send you *Sankara Matha Samgraham* at once. In order to keep the readers interested illustrations are also freely introduced in writing about the nature of the religion; the book is thus becoming more detailed and voluminous than anticipated. So, Monday will have to be postponed. If the religion of the great teacher is explained after the publication of the *Acharya Charitha Samgraha* there is nothing to be lost, even if this essay lengthens out a bit.

The *Sandesams* may be taken up one after the other, I hope. Perhaps this hope aids my laziness too. Yet, I shall make an attempt.

Kudamperi Kathasaram, which is with Ettan Tampuran, I shall get down for you. Don't you worry about it.

I have recently compressed the old story of *Thuppal Kolampi* into a hundred verses. I shall send it on to you if you want it. Otherwise, I am thinking of sending it on to the *Ilakshaposhini* of Varghese Mappila.

At any rate, I am not one who has not done what

one can to help our *Vidyavinodini*; but I must say again that your enthusiasm should undermine my laziness."

Through the kindness of this honoured friend of mine, it was possible for me to publish poetical renderings of the four works referred to in this letter: *Sankara Charitham*, *Kadambari-kathasaram*, *Saka-Kobila-Sandesham*. He was a gifted poet and a hearty, generous friend; and so it was that I pressed him for the translations of these works.

Two magazines for the bringing into being of which I exerted were the *Sarada* and the *Kairali*. The *Sarada* was a Ladies Magazine, the first of its kind, and was edited by my wife and two of our relatives and friends, Mrs. C. Itanunni Menon, and another.

But all the pioneering work had to be done by me. The first number was adorned by a contribution from H. B. Valiya Koil Tampuran who also sent a handsome donation from his illustrious Consort as well. It was a high class magazine, and I was glad to find that its distribution among womankind was very encouraging. The literary help we got from educated ladies too was substantial. When certain persons found it flourishing financially as well, they longed to own it. And so we parted with it, so that my wife might be spared the increasing burden, and I the drudgery connected with its conduct. In our hands it had a glorious life and served its purpose of spreading culture among the sisters of Kerala supremely well. The *Kairali* was after the model of the *Vidya Vinodini*, which latter in the hands of Rao Bahadur Appu Nedungudi, maintained its pristine prestige; but, after Mr. P. Gopala Menon took it up, he altered its warp and woof. The literary world did not like the pattern evolved by the new owner. It gradually deteriorated in its contents and circulation and, finally, after a few fitful years, it ceased to exist.

In a way, I was responsible for the change of hands on both occasions; but then I never apprehended any danger. With sincere concern I wrote to him on the subject. This is his reply.

19-2-77.

"My dear Aniyar,

Your note to hand. Rightly or wrongly you have helped me in getting the *Vidya Vinodini* into my hands; and rightly or wrongly I have advertised my views as to how it is to be conducted in the future. After all, let us hope that the apprehensions entertained about it will prove more fanciful than real. Whether it be so or not, let me know definitely what you are, if at all, prepared to do in the matter. Do you undertake to advise me systematically what articles, whether my own or of others, such as I send you, are to be rejected as unworthy of publication with your reasons for same; and amongst those to be published what alterations in language, sentiment, or orthography are to be made. For this and for the systematic supply of articles you undertake to supply what consideration you should have. Of course I only want advice, which I do not always pledge to follow.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. P. Gopala Menon."

I answered that this was a tall order which, as a struggling lawyer with limited time, I could not possibly obey. With that note my link with that magazine I snapped.

It was long after the disappearance of the *Vidya Vinodini* that I exerted to start the *Kairali*. It took time to do so as I was really anxious to build it up on a secure basis. I consulted my friends, Dr. K. (Kolatheri) Sankara Menon and Mr. M. Narayana Menon, about it. We met several times to discuss the several aspects connected with it. My diaries of 1115 and 1116 teem with references to such meetings

and matters connected with the *Kairali*. After the initial steps had taken shape to our satisfaction, Mr. Sankara Menon and myself went, on 21st of November 1915, to the Hill Palace to pray for the magazine the patronage of Srimathi V. K. Parukutty Nethyaramma, the Consort of His Highness the then Maharaja. When that we got, we forged ahead and brought out the first number in the January of 1916. Some time after, the difficulty that we experienced to attend to its growing demands, forced us to part with the conduct of it to other hands.

Some time before the starting of the *Kairali*, both Mr. Sankara Menon and myself had to shoulder the burden of another monthly, the *Mangalodayam*. The following letter of His Highness Rama Varma Appan Thampuran to me will explain how it came about. It refers to a resolution of the Sahitya Samajam which authorised the President to request Mr. K. S. Menon and me to edit its magazine, the *Mangalodayam*.

"Resolved to entrust the editing of *Mangalodayam* to Messrs. T. K. Krishna Menon and Kolathuri Sankara Menon, so as to alter its present status and to raise it to a fitting position." In communicating this to you, I request you to kindly comply with the request.

5-3-1900

(Sd.) Rama Varma.

The Cochin Sahitya Samajam was a registered association started on 11-7-1888 M. E. On that day, I am translating from the preamble given in Malayalam to the Memorandum and Articles of association, — 'On the invitation of His Highness Appan Thampuran and Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon, a meeting was held in the Sircar High School at Trichur. It was resolved then to start the Cochin Sahitya Samajam for the development of the Kerala language. Messrs. C. Achyutha Menon, T. K. Krishna Menon and V. K. Kunjan Menon were authorised to take the necessary

steps for organising it, to draft the constitution and to convene a second meeting on an early day. The meeting so held, on 4-10-1938, under the presidency of His Highness Appan Thampuran, passed the rules with the needed modifications, elected an Executive Committee with His Highness as the President, Mr. C. Achyuta Menon as the Editor of the magazine, Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon as the Secretary, Mr. K. Govindan Nanbiyar as the Treasurer, and Messrs. V. K. Kunjan Menon and C. Kunhi Raman Menon as the other members, and authorised the Committee to request the Diwan to permit the association to be registered free."

The *Mangalodayam* was the organ of this Samajam; and it was this that Dr. K. S. Menon and myself were asked to edit. We were happy to realise that the reaction on our acceptance of the editorship was highly stimulating and encouraging to us. His Highness Appan Thampuran, Messrs. Uthar, Vallathole, T. K. Joseph, K. P. Padmanabha Menon, Seshagiri Prabhu, P. V. Krishna Warriar and others promised their help to us.

Ayyenthole

14-3-1939

My dear Aniyam Menon,

I am immensely glad to hear that you have accepted the editorship for one year at least I will try to send you an article for the next issue. With best wishes,

Ever yours sincerely,

Sd. Rama Varma.

Mr. Vallathole Nanyana Menon wrote to say that he felt relieved by our accepting the editorship of *Mangalodayam* which, at that time, was being conducted in a way not creditable to the Samajam. He adds that I know that he is one who is ready to take part in any activity of mine.

Trivandrum,
23-11-14

My dear Mr. Menon,

..... I am extremely glad that the editorship of *Mangalodayam* has been accepted by you two. I am also quite sure that you have done so at the right moment. For the *Bhasha Poshini* which has been decadent for a long time shows signs of becoming defunct Your *Sahitya Samajam* must, I think, come forward to improve our tongue

I shall send you an article this month I shall, however, request some of my friends — who can write sense — to help you with their contribution

Yours sincerely,
Ed. T. K. Joseph.

Trivandrum,
8-12-1114.

My dear friend,

I am bound to support *Mangalodayam*, now that you have taken up its editorship. I do not offer any excuse, because you will not accept any. May I, to begin with, send you a *Stavam* hitherto unpublished, by an ancient and unknown author?

സ്വപിസൃതകൃപാധാരം ജനനമരണമെന്നമ്മ
തോൽവലിയാനി.

നി-മാക്കട്ടാൻ നിദവിട്ടുള്ള മതിമനമേ!

മാറിടേ വേണമല്ല.

ആചാരാനുവർത്തിതം നിരൂപണനവിദ്യ

ഇതുകേൾക്കുവിട്ടു

വാരാശിശാസ്ത്രാനുസാരമെന്നപ്രകാരം

കീർതിനാലാണിതികൃതം.

(Birth and death are but like needle and thread. Oh mind! enough of your idea to avoid death. You need do only these — follow the customs, obey teachers, and always chant the names of the Almighty.)

I shall send you something more substantial ere long.

Yours very sincerely,
Sd. U. Parameswara Aiyer.

Both Mr. Sankara Menon and myself really wanted to raise the Samajam and its organ to an enviable level. But our work had to be cut short by an unseemly event. The accompanying printed letter which, to justify our conduct, we had to address to a dozen gentlemen will explain the cause of the rupture.

A committee, consisting of Mr. Ramakrishna Pillai and others, was constituted by the Sahitya Samajam to report whether or not Mr. Karuppan's *Padakalesam* could be published under the auspices of that Samajam. That committee reported that it should be so done. Then Mr. P. R. Pillai, in his individual capacity, published in *Mangalaganam* a criticism of that work. Is there anything wrong in publishing in that magazine a reply from Mr. Karuppan?

Ernakulam,) (Sd.) P. K. Krishna Menon
17-7-1900.) (Sd.) K. Sankara Menon
Editors.

We got from all decisive answers that commended our procedure. Still we thought it wise and self-respecting to retire from our honorary post instead of leaving ourselves exposed to be questioned by a committee, to put it charitably, of a vacillating character.

After that, I devoted most of my spare hours to the making of books. That task was more suited to my taste than writing articles for papers and magazines. To that I was also accustomed from the middle of my adolescent period.

When we do a thing, we must do it to the best of our ability; and our acts must also serve a definite

purpose that will be beneficial to the world. I have, as far as possible, invariably tried to follow these two important principles in the alignment of my conduct in life. These I adopted in my literary pursuits also, whether it be a book that I wrote or translated, or I made others write or render into our mother-tongue. Even in writing introductions to books and in delivering addresses to the public, I carried these rules with me. It is not my purpose here, nor is it humanly possible, to give a list of the important lectures I have delivered, of the meetings over which I have presided, and of the books to which I had to write introductions.

Just to show that I am not exaggerating, I shall take, at random, a page from the digest of my diary and show one item, a few of the important meetings over which I had to preside in four years covered by that page. A few others will come in in other places.

1938-1-20. Presided over a public meeting in Ernakulam of the Bharatha Insurance Company. * 1938-2-12. Presided over a public meeting in Muttanchery where an address of congratulation was presented to Haji Ismail Haji Essa Sait. * 1938-4-10. Presided over the Pandit Kavuppan Memorial meeting at Azhikkal. * 1938-5-29. Presided over a public meeting in the St. Albert's High School Hall when Rev. Fr. J. Kalanikkal, who was in Rome for 5 years, spoke on Facism. * 1938-5-31. Presided over a public meeting in Perumanoor intended to start a library and reading room in memory of the late Chevalier Mr. C. P. Luiz. * 1938-6-10. Presided over the Bankim Babu Centenary Celebration public meeting at Ernakulam in the S. R. School, when Pandit R. C. Sarna read a paper on that novelist's life and writings. * 1938-11-19. Presided over a public meeting of the Y. M. Association Ernakulam intended for the distribution of rice for the poor and of prizes to the winners in sports among labourers. * 1938-11-30.

resided over the public meeting of the Ernakulam Muslim School held to condole over the death of Mr. Haukat Ali. * 1939-2-5. Performed the ceremony of pening a Hall and Library at Trippeonithurah to commemorate the memory of the late Palliyil Gopala Iyengar. * 1939-3-29. Presided over the Joint Schools' Day Celebration at Kadungamangalam. Spoke on the Wardha scheme and the compulsory study of Hindi. * 1939-5-2. Presided over the annual Nayar Mahasamajam Conference at Kodakara. * 1939-11-1. Presided over the Kalamandalam Conference at Shoranur. * 1939-11-4. Opened the Cooperative Conference at Valluruthi. * 1939-12-29, 30. Presided over the Asstra Sadas and over the Public Meeting of the Sanskrit College at Trippeonithura. * 1940-1-25. Presided over the public meeting under the auspices of the W. C. A. held to condole over the death of Mr. D. Ouseph. * 1940-2-28. Presided over the School Day Celebrations at Kaluti. * 1940-3-2. Delivered the inaugural address to the combined Literary and Historical Associations of the St. Theresa College. * 1940-6-2. Presided at Narakkal over the combined meeting of Pandit Kuttappa Memorial Samajams. * 1940-7-13. Presided over the meeting of the Residential Palace Literary Society. * 1940-8-15. Presided over the public meeting of the Sri Venkatesa Samithi at Cheralayi. * 1940-12-29. Presided over a session of the All-Kerala Parishat Conference at Palghat. * 1941-2-23. Presided over the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Krishnavarma School at Edapilly. * 1941-11-30. Presided over the Edavanakkad Cheruvam Yogam.

Before I start to remark upon a few books and aspects of my literary work, I shall give a few extracts from my diary which will, in some way, serve as samples of the several channels through which my work coursed.

-11-1912. Engaged in revising the proofs of my wife's

rendering of Bankim Babu's *Poison Tree*, and also those of the works I collected of Venmani Namputiripads, father and son. A good part of my time the Cherayi Sabha people claimed, as they came to have their rules carefully revised by me. Luckily, I had gone over the rules before and jotted down, what I thought to be, needed modifications. So I was able to get through the work easily, to the satisfaction of the Sabha members. As a relaxation, began to write the preface to Pamthalath Thampuram, a *Ragmangada Charitham*, a *Mahabhyga*. This I have to do in compliance with the wish of His Highness Valiya Koil Thampuram.

The author sent the book to me once before directly for revision and an introduction. I read and returned it. It was from Vycome that His Highness Valiya Koil Thampuram personally asked me to help the poet with an Introduction. Evidently, this was done at the instance of the author to whom I had expressed my incompetence to undertake the work.

Pamthalam,

8-2-88.

Dear friend,

..... You are right in pointing out certain defects there. The work will be published only if literary men like you consent to its publication. You will give your opinion on the matter.

Your friend

(Sd.) Kerala Varma.

21-8-1915. Mr. T. Ramalingam Pillai, a well-known writer and a favourite pupil of Dr. Miller, wants me to write a Preface to his *Padmavini*, a novel. In a jocular vein, I wrote to him that he and I seem to be cousins, as his house-name is, like that of mine, Thodakkad. Rev. Fr. Jacob Naduvathisery wants me to revise his life of Christ and to write a Preface. I

appreciate the compliment. * 12-9-1916. With Mr. Karimpetta Achyuta Menon and Mr. Parakkal Krishna Menon went to the Residential Palace to seek help to conduct a കൂടിയാട്ടം (Koodiyattam) in the local temple. A ready, generous response we had.

His Highness the Elaya Raja (who came to be known as Dharmika Chakravathi) gave presents to the Chakyars who took part in the Kutyattam. When he became the ruler, he passed favourable orders on our memorial to him to have Kathu performed in the local temple yearly for 21 days.

24-2-1917. Am revising proofs of my *Bhava-Kavya-Praveshika*. I trust the book will be a source of real help to beginners. Am asked to prepare two papers for the Pandits' examination.

19-6-1917. His Highness (whose demise took place at Madras) spoke highly about my *Speeches and Writings*, and asked me to send 50 copies to His Highness. I expressed my gratitude for that gracious act. I have given a lot of copies of the book to Mr. P. V. Verghese, Council Chairman, in aid of his Poor House Scheme.

2-2-1919. Revising proofs of wife's rendering of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Krishnakanta's Will*.

17-3-1919. Writing the introduction to Pandit Karuppan's rendering of *Bhaimiparinayam*. From the Mysore Asthanapanditar poet I got him the right of translation through my friend, Mr. T. G. Riamier of the Mysore Civil Service. Have in a way collected materials to write a life of Diwan Sankunni Menon. Both as a Cochinite and as an *Aanutharavan* of that illustrious patriot of Cochin, I am bound to write it.

2-10-1921. Went with my nephew Kochappan (Dr.), on his request, to Vycome to arrange for the rice-giving ceremony of his child. His wife and my wife came with us. We were the guests of my friend, Mr. Vatakankoor Rajaraja Varma Raja, while another friend of mine, Mr. K. Rama Kurup, Munsiff, helped

us in getting through the ceremony soon. Presided over the *Sanmargaposhini Sabha*. In my speech, I suggested the starting of a Kerala Sahitya Parishat. A committee was formed at once by the Sabha to work out my plan. The Sabha referred in grateful terms to my presiding over the first anniversary of the Sabha in Chingam 1082 M. E.

About this speech, Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai wrote to me in appreciative terms on 21-12-1921.

"Coming to the copy of your address, I thank you for the same, though I read it already in *Kairali*. It is valuable in as much as it lays down certain definite channels into which literary activity may be directed to flow with advantage. As it is, our literary output is not aimed at any particular object, and hence turns out to be mainly a sort of perishable matter. Such things create only a passing interest. They do not get embedded into the national literature, which itself calls for careful examination and elucidation to set it off to advantage. I congratulate you on your suggestions which are full of your characteristic shrewdness."

24-3-1922. Mr. C. Achyuta Menon sends me a chapter of Diwan Sankunni Menon's life. It contains a narrative of the dispute over the Kuzhur temple between Paliyam and His Highness the Elaya Raja (who died in 1071 Chingam as the Mubaraja). It gave rise to a criminal suit in which Judge Thiruvencata Chari played not a graceful part. For a long time, His Highness laboured under the mistaken idea that Diwan Sankunni Menon sided with Paliyam. The Diwan's conduct in the affair was applauded by the British Government, while that of the Judge was by it severely animadverted. I have studied the question carefully. Mr. C. A. Menon is doubtful as to the propriety of publishing the chapter, as certain persons, so he writes, told him that it would offend the Reigning Family. I replied that there was no cause

THE DAYS THAT WERE

his fear, and that a life of Sankunni Menon with-reference to this incident would be incomplete.
1922. Sent several fresh facts from my collection
Achyuta Menon's chapter on the Kuzhur temple
c.

1922. He has sent me the rest of the chapters of
life for my revision.

1922. He sends me his life of Diwan Sankara-
rier also for my critical perusal.

1922. Mr. C. Achyuta Menon has given me leave
to translate his life of Diwan Sankunni Menon into
Malayalam.

I began the work at once, and the Malayalam
edition was published on 21-4-1923, even before its
English version was brought out by Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.

Highness kindly told me, on 6-5-1923, that he
liked my book, and also spoke in very high terms about
Sankunni Menon. When I was engaged on this work,
I had also to revise the life of my revered master,
Narayana Marar, written by his nephew and son-
in-law, Mr. Achyuta Marar.

1922. The Director of Public Instruction, Ma-
labar, has sent me a portion of the Malayalam-English
Dictionary of Dr. Gundert for my opinion on the
correctness of the same.

Once before, the Basel Mission Press of Manga-
lur wanted me to revise the work. On 12-19-1919,
the authorities sent me a copy of that work and
said, "We are glad to learn from Mr. (Joseph)
Pillai that you have consented to help in the
revision of Dr. Gundert's Malayalam-English Dictio-
nary." But, when I wrote to them how it has to be
done, and my terms for doing it, they said they could
not pay me only at the rate of Re. 1 per page,
and that my preliminary expenses would have to be
deducted from my remuneration, I told them that
I might look to some other to do the work.

To the Director I sent this answer on 26-12-1922.

"Your R.O.No. 1774B of 1923, dated 29-11-1922. Except with gratitude and reverence, no Malayali could pronounce the name of Dr. Gundert, because of the service the Reverend Gentlemen has rendered to the cause of the Malayalam Language. His dictionary and grammar are the results of his patient research and profound scholarship. But, since his day, the language has considerably developed, and, in order that his works may be as useful as when they were first published, they have to be revised in a scholarly and careful manner. In the matter of the dictionary particularly, it can, in my humble opinion, be done only by a committee of competent men. Besides revising the book itself, several words, both from the spoken language and the published works, have to be incorporated into it, including terms that have reference to the arts, crafts and sciences. I am afraid the pages sent to me do not bear the impress of his sort of revision."

I have ever been of opinion that a Malayalam Dictionary, an Anglo-Malayalam Dictionary, and a History of Malayalam Literature are absolutely necessary for the due development of our language. The Malayalam Improvement Committee tried to do a bit of spade work. But it was little; and, for want of help and encouragement it had to be stopped. I tried to create an interest in the Oxford University Press over the Dictionary scheme. There too, for want of a generous response from the three Governments, that institution did not push the matter through. "I am sure" so Mr. S. V. Rangaswami Ayyar, who was, before he joined the University Press, the Vice-Principal of the Zamorin's College, wrote to me in a letter from Madras, dated 23-10-1913, "we shall be able at Ernakulam to lay down the basis on which the work shall be founded. With your own high culture and vast and valuable experience, combined with that of Mr. C. Achyuta Menon, it is to be hoped

we shall be able to do something substantial'. I hope to be able to meet you next Monday." When he came to Ennakulam, the Diwan sent him over to me. We two sat up and prepared our estimate of the cost required for the collection of words, for the preparation of the dictionary and for its publication. It came to about 3 lakhs of rupees. The Diwan rightly said that this State could only contribute a third of the amount. While a member of the Senate, I tried my best to make the University take up this work; but it cautiously remarked that it could launch this new venture only after the Tamil Lexicon had its course run and safely harboured.

Next, the Director of Public Instruction in Madras invited me, in October 1923, to a seat on a Committee for the preparation of a list of scientific terms in the vernaculars of the Presidency. I accepted the place, and also suggested the names of His Highness Appan Tampuran, Mr. Ullur S. Parameswara Iyer, Dr. K. Sankara Menon and Mr. P. S. Warriar, to be taken on the committee. My ambition about the dictionaries and the history of our literature is yet to be realised.

In 1924, I find I had to revise the manuscript of the *Bharateeya Vanitadarsangal*, and its proofs, to revise an interesting *History of Ancient Indian Universities* by Mr P. Anujan Achan and to write a Preface to it, to revise the Malayalam rendering of Sir Robert Ball's *Starland* by Srimathi P. Thamkamma, a work which I made her kindly do, and that of the *Cage of Gold* by my niece, Sy. Madhavi Amma, and also to write an introduction to the collected works of Oravankara Raja, published by his son.

6-12-1924. Got the first copy of Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon's first volume of the *History of Kerala*. The format is as good as that of any decent work, printed and published by any well-known English firm. The proofs of some forms I had to read three

and four times. * 24-3-1925. The Director of Public Instruction of Madras asks me if I can help him with the Malayalam translation of Mr. Green's *First Book of Rural Science*. He offers a remuneration of Rs. 400. It will be a very useful book for our villagers. Accepted the offer.

This rendering was published by Messrs. Macmillan and Co. in the November of 1925.

After a few more extracts, taken from dates with long intervals between, I shall begin to say a few words on certain particular works which may interest a general reader.

25-2-1930. Library day. In the absence of Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon, I had to welcome the guests. In our report and in my speech we scrupulously avoided every reference to the correspondence that is going on between the Executive Committee and the Government as to the management of the institution. But when the Diwan made a pointed reference to it, I had to say in my reply, "The die is cast. We would fight to a finish for the independence of this Public Library." I pray for your help as one who had worked for its development." He did not take my words amiss, but gave an encouraging smile.

17-4-1930. My friend Karappan read out to me several parts of his *Kilipatra* about Chottanikkara temple. He has written it as desired by me. I supplied the materials for it. I suggested a few alterations, here and there, and have requested him to add a few devotional lines towards the close, and also lines or slokas for *manasa-puja*. He proposes to call the work *Lalitopaharam*, a nice title.

28-9-1930. Preparing the manuscripts of the Ernakulam *Kshetra-Mahatmyam*, for the press. It is an old Malayalam translation of an ancient Sanskrit work, which was originally preserved in the Cranganore Library. A wonderful work. -I am glad it has come to my hands, and that there are pious souls

to finance its publication. To some places I had to send reliable messengers to verify some facts stated in it.

2-10-1930. P. K. Narayana Pillai lectures on Ezhu-thassan under the auspices of the Chathu Panikkar Memorial Endowment which I have founded in memory of my great father.

28-12-1930. A special messenger has come from Quilon to invite my wife and myself to preside over two meetings of the All-Kerala Sahitya Parishat. He brings a letter to me from my dear friend P. K. Narayana Pillai. There was a telegraphic message 3 or 4 days ago for the same purpose. For some reasons, we had to decline the flattering request.

13-10-1931. Went to see the Diwan. In the course of the talk, among other subjects, I mentioned to him about the All-Kerala Parishat conference, its constitution and the nature of its work.

16-10-1931. With His Highness Ammamman Thampuran I went to see the Diwan to seek help for the Parishat Conference which is to be held here this year. He gave us an encouraging reply. Just as we were coming out, he said with a smile, "Mr. Krishna Menon came here the other day, to prepare for this visit, I suppose." "You have guessed right," I said and added, "We two have to mainly shoulder the responsibility." For his remark, "May success crown your efforts," we thanked him.

Both of us worked very hard to make the Parishat Conference a success, and to make the Parishat a permanent institution.

1931-12-28. Dr L. A. Ravi Varma opened the Parishat Exhibition. Mr. Thomas Panj is mainly responsible for the excellence of the exhibits. Mr. M. Rajaraja Varma, M. A. B. L., presided over the public meeting. His address was a masterly one, and practical too. He is very business-like, and so we have

selected him to conduct the public meetings.
1931-12-29. The sub Committees to consider and report on the following subjects met today under their respective Chairmen:-

(1) Development of Malayalam Literature — Mr. U. Parameswara Iyer; (2) Fine arts of Kerala — Mr. Vallathole Narayana Menon; (3) Compilation of a Malayalam Dictionary — His Highness Appan Thampuran; (4) Publication — Mr. Thomas Paul; and (5) Journalism — Mr. C. V. Kunhiraman. On the 30th, at the Business meeting, it was resolved to register the Parishat; and, for that purpose, we passed the memorandum and the articles of association. We also settled to start a quarterly under the auspices of the Parishat. Both Mr. Rajaraja Varma and Mr. Ullaz Parameswara Iyer said that this was "the best session" they have attended. Mr. Vallathole Narayana Menon concurred with this opinion, and said "എല്ലാവരും ഒരുപോലെ പങ്കെടുത്തു" (For the speeches too, wife and husband have carried the credit)

Long after, on 3-7-39, Prof. P. Sankaran Nambiyar sent me this note.

"Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon,

"Herewith forwarding the "Parishat Registration Document", for favour of safe custody. Since you were mainly responsible for it, it ought to be in your possession. Let it not go out of our hands, in any case.

Sd. P. S. Nambiyar."

1939-8-19. Am preparing a paper on the Folksongs of Kerala. October 11. Read it before the annual meeting of the combined associations of the St. Theresa College. Mrs. Bristow presided. As an expert in English music, she appreciated my paper very much.

Mr. V. K. Rama Menon, M. A., Bar-at-Law, now a District Educational Officer in the British Service, and myself tried our best to start a Folklore

Society. We two, along with Mr. T. A. Doraswamy Iyer, issued this appeal.

"The ancient, customs, beliefs, sayings, songs, stories, conundrums folk-stories, plays, etc have all begun to die out. These have to be collected, recorded and preserved. Students in general, and students of history in particular, should study these. For carrying out this object, persons must come forth to work as well as to spend money. Any one who is willing to help in either way is earnestly requested to contact with us."

Hill Palace,

6-8-'96.

"Thanks for your letter and the pro off of the appeal. I think it is good: Only, the subscription might be reduced to one rupee. Thus the appeal would reach a wider circle. As to including Mr. Doraswamy Iyer, I think it is an excellent idea. . . .

The Palace Officer (Mr. Itama Varma Raja of Cranganore) thinks that it is enough if we publish an annual. Otherwise he thinks we might not have matter enough. Then he suggests the holding of a sort of Folklore Congress once a year, where papers could be read.

Yours

V. K. R."

Our efforts, for want of an earnest response, proved fruitless.

On 19-9-1932, Dr. Arnold Bake, I believe of the Leyden University, came to me for help to record some of our Folksongs. Next day, he and his wife had tea in my place when I introduced him to my friend Mr. Paulit Karuppan with whose ready co-operation it was possible for me to assist Dr. Bake in his work. In the April of 1938, when Dr. and Mrs. Bake again came to me, Dr. Bake was a Research Scholar sent out by the Brasenose College of the Oxford University to record Folksongs especially of a

devotional character. My friend Karuppan was no more, and I had to secure the assistance of the retired Police Inspector Mr. Pascal, and of Mr. Kesavan, B.A., the Inspector of Fisheries and a relative of Pandit Karuppan. The work was easily done as Dr. Bake had a touring car at his disposal with the latest machinery for taking records. Their simultaneous reproduction created not a little excitement among those who had come to contribute these songs to him. On my invitation Dr. Bake gave a lecture before a dinner meeting of our Cochin Rotary Club, and, later on, both of us had to speak on Folksongs before a meeting of the Kerala Club at Ootacamund under the presidency of Mr. P. C. Macqueen, I. C. S., the Collector of Nilgiris, and an authority on the Balladsongs of North Malabar.

I think you know that my work falls now under the University of Oxford, as I have been elected to a Senior Research Fellowship of Brasenose College, especially for the study of religious songs and music of India I do hope you will be so kind again as to give your assistance and lend us the invaluable help of your experience. I have also written to the Diwan. So Dr. Bake wrote to me on 11.3.1938 from Trivandrum whence he moved into Cochin. But the Diwan, Sir Shunmukham Chetty, somehow, did not take to him kindly. Not daunted, he did his work and went his way; and, then, from Srinagar he wrote to me a letter, on 20-11-193, from which I shall quote a sentence or two. "Your kindness, friendship, and helpful understanding of the nature of my work on every possible occasion, not only during all our three visits to Cochin but also later in Ooty never made me doubt that you were not of the Diwan's opinion that we were "itinerating tourists visiting India in order to enjoy a good holiday on other people's expense (justifying the refusal of the Cochin State to act as "honorary hotel-keepers" to this kind of people)". . . .

..... "Your friendship, the kindness of Pandit Karuppan, the ever ready kindness of Prince Rama Varma, and of Mr. Herbert and Col. Ritchard, were and are very precious in our memories." I was sorry to hear of the incident.

I am confident that it is still possible to collect any number of folksongs and other bits of literature that go to make folklore; and that a history of ancient Kerala based on these will be a valuable work. Further, folksongs will stimulate the development of music, of literature, and of the physique in Kerala. When I was nominated as a member of the Faculty of Oriental Studies and Fine Arts of the Travancore University, (R.O.C. No. 5150 of '41, dated 17-7-1941), I had the following resolution unanimously carried by that body: "That it be a recommendation to the Syndicate that early steps be taken for the collection and publication of the Folklore of Ancient Kerala." I have also submitted a memorandum to the Registrar as to how this can be done cheaply and effectively. His Highness the Maharaja, Her Highness the Maharani and Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer told me that mine was a timely move and that it would have their warm support.

1933-10-17. Today I delivered the University Extension Lecture in the Maharaja's College Hall. My subject, *the Dravidian Culture and its Diffusion*, and the mode of my treatment were appreciated by Lt. Col. D. M. Field, the Political Agent, who presided. Sy. V. K. Lekshmikutty Nethiyamma was also present. On reading, I found the paper a bit longer than I wanted it to be. But the rule of the minor, 'Stop boring if there is no oil', I could not apply.

1936-6-26. Dr. L. A. Ravi Varma insists on my writing an introduction to his edition of the *Kena Upanishad*. So I wrote it and sent it on the 9th of July.

1937-1-31. With wife I went to Ponnai to preside over a session of the Kattakkayam Memorial meeting.

We started early, after our bath, so as to worship in two or three famous temples on the way. Though these were open to all Hindus, we did not see any member of the depressed class in them. The temples were kept clean; and there were guides to help us. We had a hearty welcome at Palayi. I took the chair at the morning session, and Vallathole in the afternoon. The poet spoke in very high terms about we two, so much so that I feared he would forget Kattakkayam. "I consider Kalyani-Krishna Menon as my guru; so much have they worked for our language. I shall sit where Krishna Menon has sat only after I honour it." In this strain he went on. After his speech, we started back so as to reach Ernakulam before dusk.

1938-3-7. Only two days ago, I presided over a public meeting to record our sorrow over Pandit Kattappan's death. Then, besides myself, Sy. A. Karthyayani Amma and Mr. K. Ayyappan, the Deputy President of the Council, spoke about him. Yesterday I went, with Mr. Achyutha Menon K., the Diwan Palshenr, and others, to Anappuzha, an Araya centre near Thiruvanchikulam, to unveil my friend Kattappan's likeness. We went by boat, and were received with honours. After the ceremony, I returned by train.

1938-3-8. Presided over the Teachers' Conference at Moovattupuzha. The large pandal was crowded to its utmost capacity. I spoke on, what its advocates term it, *Jivatsahithyam*. Of course, I am not a partisan of it as expressed by some of its frantic exponents. I was glad to note that my remarks were much liked by most of the teachers to whom they were meant. Just as I was leaving the place, I heard of the death of my very dear friend, Mr. V. Krishnan Thampi. A severe loss to me and to the cause of Malayalam literature.

1938-8-27. Opened Padmalaya Book Depot here, owned by a niece of the late Mr. K. Rama Menon who started and owned the B. V. Book Depot and Printing

Works, at Trivandrum.

1938-9-16. Dr. A.I. Simon forced me to go over to Cochin to show me the result of the research work he has been doing for a history of the Jews in Cochin, and to clear certain doubts he had about the subject. We had a long, interesting talk over them.

1938-9-24. Purohit Swami was taken over to me by Mr. C. J. Mathew and Mr. K. V. Menon. He is a State Guest. We two had a very long talk about his life and work, and also about the history of this State. He is a Sanyasi, and his guru is a disciple of Dattatreya Maharshi. 1938-9-25. He sent me his *Karma Yoga Sutras* for 'perusal and criticism'. 1938-9-26. He accepted my humble hints about his Sutras. He gave me his master's life to read. I bought his autobiography, the translation of the *Desopanishads*, done by the poet Yeats and himself. October 1. On my request, he spoke on Hinduism at the Rotary Lunch meeting.

1939-1-25. Sent back, after careful revision, to Rev. Fr. J. Mavunkal his poem.

1939-2-1. Paid my respects to His Highness. He spoke to me of the songs he is getting printed, and also of the materials he has collected about Saktan Tampuran. This he said in reply to my request to direct the Sarvadhikariakar to write a life of that great ruler. He also graciously told me to ask the Sarvadhi to send me a set of the books of songs so far printed, as only a limited number of copies are being printed. On a former occasion, he gave me one of the 25 printed copies of the Diary he had kept of his tour to Northern India.

Soon after, I wrote to the Sarvadhikariakar, as directed, for the copies. To which I got this reply.

Hill Palace,
Trippoonithurath,
28-6-1114.

My dear Uncle,

I placed your request (for a set of books printed) before His Highness. The spare copies of the first 10 books are in His Highness' almirah in the Hill Palace, and so His Highness said they could be sent only after His Highness' return to that Palace. At present His Highness is at Tripunithuram. I shall get the books as soon as His Highness goes back to the Hill Palace and forward them to you.

The manuscript of the anecdotes relating to Sakthan Valia Thampuran is in the Hill Palace, and His Highness said he would give it to me for printing after His Highness's return to the Hill Palace.

With best respects,

Yours affectionately,

Sd. T. K. Sankara Menon.

Mr. Sankara Menon passed away on 28-6-1939, and then Mr. P. Raman Menon, who succeeded him, got charge of the manuscripts from His Highness.

1939-7-16, Sent the last of my articles to the *Deepam* on my pilgrimage. What a relief!

1939-10-2, Delivered my University Extension Lecture, in Malayalam, on *Rural Uplift*.

1939-11-10, Talk with Mr. Elammana Krishna Menon and Mr. P. Rama Menon about employing Mr. P. Ramachandra Menon to collect manuscripts and to write monographs on the famous temples of the State. December 19, Glad I am able to get a job to Mr. Ramachandra Menon. I asked him to be grateful to Mr. E. Krishna Menon.

1940-7-30, Am reading, as requested by Mr. Paliyath Cheriya Kunhunni Achan, his rendering of Sri Arabinda Ghose's work on *Gita*. He wants me to revise it, as also to write a Preface to it. August 30, Returned the manuscripts with the Preface.

1941-12-23. Tapovanaswami sends me from Tehri, Garwal, Uttarakasi, in the Himalayas, his blessings, and prasad, along with the manuscripts of his *Himavirvihar* for publication. I do not know him; and so this request I consider as a privilege to me, as well as a blessing.

I always liked to enrich our literature, and to encourage literary men in every way that is available to a humble individual like myself. I have never spared myself in that kind of noble work. Thus it was with sincere pleasure that I read these lines about me from the masterly Preface of Rao Sahib, Mahalaxmi, Sahitya-Bhushanan, Ullur S. Parameswara Iyer, M. A., B. L., to my *Lekhanamala*:

I shall give a feeble rendering in English. "The occasion permits me only to briefly hint that, among those noble souls who have placed the uplift of the country, the people, and the language of Kerala as the supreme goal of their lives, and who have worked by word, thought and deed, in a self-sacrificing spirit, to attain it, the place he has secured is one not easily to be got at by another. There are few like him who have offered worship to the Goddess of Language with such a pure heart and such a full devotion. What all works has he not done standing here and there within the precincts of that temple! To the uplift of how many young learned men has he not given a helping hand! The evil spirit of indifference of how many blessed great poets has he not exorcised by the chant of his mystic rune! On how many occasions has not true goodness of heart taken refuge in his impartial mind to gain entrance to places which it could not otherwise do! He must know that these facts are well understood and appreciated by those who ought to know them." It is true that I have induced many a literary person to write books that suited their taste and also assisted, in the case of some, to find a sale for them. On those occasions when I

was consulted in the distribution of honours to literary men I have always tried to see them given to deserving persons, irrespective of caste or creed.

Here I think I may appropriately put in a letter or two from His Highness Appan Thampuran, the one written on the completion of his 60th year and the other a few months before his demise. This latter has reference to the work he was projecting to write on the history of ancient Kerala.

Kumaramandiram Palace,
Ayyenthole, Trichur,
20th Thulam 1111.

My dear Friend,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 18th. This is the time for me to call back the past to my memory. I am going to divulge a secret to you. You have a part in it. I do not know whether you remember the incident. When I returned from Madras after my studies and settled down at Ennakulam, you were the first among my friends to advise me to make my life useful. Ever since, this have been in my mind all along my wanderings in the service of God and man. So I owe a debt of gratitude to you, and I have to offer you my grateful thanks for setting me on the right path in the right time.

With kindest regards and loving remembrance to you and your wife. Believe me.

Ever yours sincerely,

Rama Varma

Sd. Appan Thampuran.

"9-1-41. The Ancient Kerala is, no doubt, a tough problem and its solution naturally demands labourious work, imagination and inspiration. Yet I feel a satvic pleasure in the effort, every stage of which ends in a happy realisation of the true in the midst of the untrue Your appreciation

THE DAYS THAT WERE

adds fresh enthusiasm in me to continue the work I have already taken to heart. I have thankfully noted the hints you have given in the plan of work I have in my mind."

And the next one is from his son. It is dated 6-4-1117.

" I appreciate your practical mind as I have always used to do, for realising the position and not indulging in empty philosophies. The sun of our family has risen and set with my father.

My father always used to say that it was you who directed his career to the right direction. But

when you suggest to me to complete his unfinished work, I really shudder. I am a helpless on-looker of that intellect, imagination, individuality and originality. I should never be polluting that sacred effort. To say the truth I find no better man to handle the subject than yourself. That we can decide later."

Of a few books I have already written in previous chapters. To avoid a tedious listing of the rest here, I may devote an appendix for the enumeration of the books for which I could in any way be held responsible. To that I shall also add the criticism on individual works by competent scholars and well-known journals and papers. Here I shall therefore attempt to remark only on such works which call for any special attention. Generally, as a palliative for the errors that may be found in my works, let me, at the outset, say that they were written either when I was a college student or a busy practising lawyer. This need not be understood as an excuse for exculpating me for all blame. Far from that. For I have not worked to canvass praise or gain advertisement, but as a piece of duty I owed to my country and its language and literature. I never felt sad even when premeditated malice came out to attack me for imaginary mistakes. I answered it with the

silence of indifference. "Take it from me", so once Gladstone wrote to Morely, "that to endure trampling on with patience and self-control is no bad element in the preparation of a man for walking firmly and successfully in the path of public duty. Be sure that discipline is full of blessing."

For instance, I shall cite the case of the *Physical Geography Primer*. To make it, as far as possible, as good as the original, I worked uncommonly hard on its rendering. Critics not given to superlatives pronounced it as one of the good books in the field, of scientific literature in Malayalam. In the chorus of praise that I received over it, one editor felt nervous, and he came out with a virulent attack on the translation. Fortunately, his venom was on the surface, and he was not given an easy escape from his inglorious position by several writers from all over Malabar.

With that parental solicitude, His Highness Valiya Koil Tampuran thought that the remarks of the critic would have stung me to the quick. To console me, he wrote to me in these terms: more than on any book has been, as it were you will have known my views on K. P. the delicious remarks on your *Physical Geography*, and is an instinctive characteristic of K. P. to vilify any work which all other papers glorify unanimously. Perhaps you remember how it found out a metrical defect in my *Amarakasatakam* and eventually became the butt of ridicule to all other papers."

Literary criticism, then as now, is still in a rudimentary stage in Kerala. I fear few have studied the subject systematically. In the days of the *Vidya Vinodini*, an attempt was made by that magazine to direct it on proper lines. Criticism has a positive as well as a negative function. It has to perform 'the double duty of solvent and stimulant.' "By discriminating between that which is true and false, bet-

ween good and bad art, between reality and imposture, by determining between the ephemeral idols of fashion and recalling the wandering thoughts to the worship of true beauty and greatness, criticism becomes a vitalising and energising principle."

In my prefaces and introductions to works and in my reviews of books, it has been my aim not only to perform the primary duty but also to show how we should approach literary, historical and scientific productions. Similarly, my idea had been to introduce new channels for developing our literature in publishing *Books for Malabar Bairns*, *Ancient India*, *Malayalam Science Primers*, *Kshetra Mahatmyam*, *Theerthagatras* and so on. Even the works of fiction which I was instrumental in bringing into Malayalam belong to a high order. Any one can examine the tenability of my contention. *Chandrahama*, though a small book, is a work of art, in its plot and its exposition. I have tried to catch the spirit of the original in the vernacular rendering also. It is not one of those books which will be covered by the justifiable anathemas against fiction pronounced by Frederic Harrison. But, all the while, I was attracted by the lives of great men and women. They tell so much truth in what Carlyle said that the history of mankind was the history of its great men. They form the vanguard of the world and its surest hope. Apart from that fact, there is an immediate ennobling effect in the perusal of the lives of great persons. This made me publish the Malayalam renderings of Mr. G. P. Pillai's *Representative Indians*, Mr. G. S. Dutt's *An Indian Woman* and Mr. Bhattacharya's *Ideals of Indian Womanhood*. My friends, Mr. G. P. Pillai and B. C. Dutt, readily granted me leave to translate the books. The lives of Raja Kesavadasa and of Diwan Sankunni Menon in the "*Indragiri Mahanwar*" are new. To supply a serious commission, I added them. Mr. G. P. Pillai was anxious to put them in the original

work; but he could not, at that time, get the needed materials for writing them. As in all my literary works, I had in the publication of *Indiyasla-Maharajar*, the whole-hearted guidance and support of my revered Patron, His Highness Kerala Varma, the Valiya Koil Thampuram. Mr. Dutt was greatly pleased with the Malayalam version of the life of his talented wife. On 5-1-1931, he wrote to me a long letter from Birbhum, where he was then the Collector and District Magistrate. These sentences are from it. "I do not know how to express to you my deep sense of joy at the receipt of the Malayalam edition of the book and of your letter. Your wife and yourself, by the loving care with which you both have undertaken and carried out the work of translation, have bound me with a life-long bond of friendship and affection with yourselves; and I am deeply conscious of the great honour which His Highness the Maharani Regent of Travancore and the Consort of His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin have both accorded to me and our movement — the former by allowing the Malayalam edition to be dedicated to her and the latter by writing an Introduction to the book. The value of the book has been, as you have truly remarked, greatly enhanced by the association of these two illustrious country-women of Sarej Nalini identifying themselves with the cause and the idea which the book represents".

Over the *Ideals of Indian Womanhood*, a slight obstacle stood in my way. The author wanted a handsome sum to be given him by me for his consent to translate his work. I told him, in my reply, that I did my work not as a trading concern, but purely out of patriotic motives, so as to enrich the literature of my country and spread culture among my sisters and brothers there. As a closing hit I hinted that I was surprised to see an educated Brahmin teacher bargaining for the price of knowledge. It is well-known that

such publications are failures financially, unless they are accepted as books for study or otherwise patronised by Governments. This aspect too I placed before him. I found Mr. Bhattacharya an ideal teacher. He readily fell in with my view; and to show my gratitude to him, my wife and myself created in the Victoria Girls' High School an endowment out of the sale proceeds of the book, for the award of prizes for music and painting. (Vide Dewan's Proceedings Dis. No. 223/R/1104 of 4-4-1929.) The prizes will be called the Ambalika prize, in memory of a daughter of Mr. Bhattacharya, who gave promise of a brilliant career, but who closed her earthly life all too soon. This act of ours pleased him immensely.

Rules for the award of Ambalika Prize
instituted by Mr. & Mrs.

T. K. Krishna Menon

1. Two gold medals are to be awarded annually to the deserving pupils, one for proficiency in Music and the other in Painting.

2. The prize for Music is confined to the pupils of 6th & High School classes of Victoria Girls' High School, Trichur.

3. The prize for Painting is open to all pupils of all classes of Girls' High Schools, Sirkar and aided, the Government Training School, Trichur, and to any girls of the Government Trades School.

Victoria Girls' School,) Sd. Head Mistress,
, Trichur, 22.5.1108-5-1-1933)

(True copy)

Sd. K. C. Peter,
For Director"

I was able to institute the prizes because of the patronage I received from His Highness the Maharani Regent of Travancore and His Highness the Maharaja

of Cochin, both of whom graciously purchased a number of copies of the work. When Diwan Mr. Narayana Iyer once told me that His Highness spoke about the work in very appreciative terms, that he himself read it with pleasure and profit, and remarked that a copy of it should be in every household in Kerala, I sent a copy to the Secretary to the Diwan with a request that the Government might be pleased to help me by purchasing some copies of the work: for I had to spend a lot on it so as to print it in a fitting format. The Diwan's niggardly order to buy 29 copies for the schools I did not accept! I told Mr. Mathai that I was not going to take advantage of that "generous" gesture of Mr. Narayana Iyer.

I found that from the *Suka-Kokila Sandesams*, it was possible to get glimpses of Ancient Kerala culture. That was why I prayed Mr. Kunhikudtan Tampuran to render them into Malayalam. When I noticed indifference in him over the work, I got impatient. Then to pacify me it was that he produced a Malayalam version of the *Kudambari*, a small beautiful *kavya*. It was done from my place in the course of four or five days, devoting to it each day about two hours in the morning and three hours in the afternoon. He would read the original and dictate the rendering to the writer who was by his side. He was a gifted poet. That one can easily see from his works. For preparing a few of the topographical notes for the *Kokila Sandesam*, I had the help of Mr. A. C. Gopalan Nambiyar, a relative of Professor Candeth. I gave my right over the two *Sandeshams* to the Ernakulam Literary Union and, when *san* was killed by one or two, I got the right transferred to the Ernakulam Ladies' Association.

Another work about which I wish to say a few words before I close this chapter is the *History of Kerala*, by Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon. It is an epoch-making work, splendid in conception and in

execution. It is the life-work of an extraordinary man, who had in him all the qualifications necessary for a historian. Discerning competent Indians have spoken in appreciative terms about my connection with this work. But I hold the judgment of foreigners a more sure prognostic of what the judgment of posterity is likely to be more than the judgment of my own countrymen. The opinions of a few of these I have gathered in the Preface to the second volume of the work.

All that I have to say about the work I have said in my Prefaces to its four volumes. I believe it is no plagiarism to quote my own words; for I do want to extract some parts from the Foreward to the concluding volume, which I wrote on the 16th of February 1937.

"It was on the 24th of October 1924 that the printing of the first volume of this great work was started. It has demanded all the unremitting toil all these twelve years; and it is with no small gratification that I contemplate the completion of this arduous undertaking."

"My connection with the work commenced long before this period. While I was studying in Madras, I had to frequent the libraries there to furnish extracts and to verify references to these. After I settled down here to practise at the bar, I had to read several parts of this with the author, and to get, at his instance, a Note or two revised by my revered master, ¹Jr. D. M. Cruickshank, and a few others by Mr. Glyn Barlow

"As desired by the author, in his last will and testament, I have tried, according to my lights, to revise the manuscripts as carefully as was possible for me to do"

"Another difficulty had been the reading of the

proofs, not once, but, as a rule, twice, and some times even three times. Only those who have experienced the trouble, and the perennial capacity of the compositors to create fresh errors can realise the mental and the physical exhaustion caused by such work.

"I write this from a seat in my garden facing the Cochin Harbour. There is a mild breeze about and the music of murmuring wavelets; and in the sky, over the prevailing background of a light violet colour, one can note the varying tints of a sun that is setting. They give a glow to the lights and shadows athwart the land-locked lagoon and the feathery palms. As the evening shadows gather, birds are hastily flying to their nests. A stillness fills the bowl of the sky. A solitary Bhramini kite is loitering in the firmament to take in air or to spot its prey, or, who knows, perhaps, to enjoy the prospect. "All is peace in the home: she sits by me, in the silence of blissful comradeship, who has shared with me the toil of life, and the joy of it," and who, above all, by her love and care and cheering words, has made it possible for me to do my life's work.

"In the remote past, Kerala played a glorious part in the spread of culture and commerce. That these volumes will indicate. May her mission in the times to come be grander and even more glorious is the prayer of this writer who can claim, without any breach of modesty, to have dedicated these literary labours to his country in a spirit of loving service. For, — that is my creed — after all, love and service form the flower and fruit of all true religions."

XIV THE RULERS, THE RESIDENTS AND THE DIWANS.

The words of the heading are. It has to be admitted, wide and vague, and take in more than what I propose to do. My idea is to speak of only those Rulers and Residents with whom it was my privilege to be well acquainted, and of those Diwans whom I knew rather intimately. They are

His Highness Rama Varma — 1071 Chingom to 1090 Vrischikam (abdicated on 7-12-1904).

His Highness Rama Varma — 1090 Vrischikam to 1107 Meenam.

His Highness Rama Varma — 1107 Meenam to 1116 Meenam.

Mr. C. W. E. Cotton, C. I. E., I. C. S. — 1098 Mithunam to 1099 Kanni 1102 Thulam to 1103 Medam.

Lt. Col. D. M. Field (now Sir D. M. Field) — 1108 Vrischikam to 1110 Kumbham.

Mr. C. P. Skrine, I. C. S., C. I. E. — 1112 Vrischikam to 1114 Mukaram.

Sir A. R. Bannerji — 1082 Edavottu to 1083 Kumbham.

Sir Joseph Blore — 1080 Kumbham to 1094 Kumbham.

Sir T. Vijayaraghava Chari — 1095 Kumbham to 1097 Medam.

Rao Bahadur P. Narayana Menon — 1097 Medam to 1100 Medam.

Rao Bahadur T. S. Narayana Iyer — 1100 Medam to 1106 Kanni.

Mr. C. G. Herbert — 1106 Medam to 1110 Kanni.

Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetty — 1110 Kanni to 1116 Meenam.

It is not my intention to write a history of the period covered by the regime of these Rulers. Here to do so it will be out of place. For the annals of those days' one can refer to the Records of Administration

and the annual reports of administration. None the less, it may be fitting to touch on some of the salient features of the reforms and achievements which signalised the reigns of these three rulers. The abdicated Ruler has left the mark of his character deep on his administration of the State. The credit for the survey and the settlement operations, for the coming in of the train, the tram, and the Town Council, for the stimulus given to agriculture, trade and industries, for the wide diffusion of sanitation and medical relief and for the improvement effected in the purity and efficiency of the administration, go to His Highness. He was a scholar among princes and a prince among scholars. He was a fine sportsman. He used to ride, to go out yachting and hunting in his adult days. He was a good shot. These extracts from two letters to me will show that he kept up the spirit even in his advanced age.

"19-8-1913 The result of the yacht race was rather disappointing to me. I am still of opinion, and many agree with me in it, that if Kalyani II (the name of one of the Sirmur yachts) was handled by a sailor like Mr. Lewis, her chances to carry the cup would have been much greater. I hope to be able to secure the services of a better sailor next time."

"14-10-1916 Two days ago, I caught a snake-eating cobra here (Kanjirappilly). It is known by the name of 'chuty', a variety of *hymyodraed*. It is said to be very poisonous. I mean sending it to the Trichur snake-house. The snake is very pretty to look at, and will measure about ten feet."

He was a man of strong likes and dislikes. When he made up his mind on any particular question, nothing would move him from there. Mr. Banerji once told me that, when he and His Highness had any difference of opinion on an important subject, he would take 'a psychological moment' to enunciate his point of view before his master.

making

I wanted very much to have a life of His Highness written and published. I wrote to His Highness about this wish of mine, and also hinted that either Mr. C. Achyutha Menon or I would gladly undertake the work. To this request, I got this reply on a near date. "If you are likely to stay here (Fritchur) today, and will find it convenient to call on me at about 4 p. m., I shall be pleased to see you. I should very much like to have a talk with you about the biography, before I give my final word on the point." Accordingly, I went to the "Merry Lodge" at Kanattukara. His Highness had his own notions as to how a life ought to be written, and told me all about them. Finally, he said that he had all the papers carefully preserved for a consecutive narrative of his official life, but that he deprecated the publication of his biography during his life-time. There we left the matter.

The next ruler was a great constitutional monarch. His generous nature and lofty patriotism and his desire to take the country through reasoned progress to the front place among the Indian States were visible in every act of his. He had 'a dislike for all pomp and ostentatious display'. His knowledge of the Ayurvedic system of medicine and his special aptitude in the treatment of cases of poisoning were always at the disposal of the public. He evinced a parental solicitude in the elevation of the depressed and backward classes. "The very first thing that engaged his anxious attention was the financial position of the State The result was remarkable. The annual income rose from 46 lakhs of rupees in 1914-8-15 to 86 lakhs in 1927-7-28, and a surplus of 12 to about 70 lakhs. Nor was expenditure tailed or stinted in any direction. The various departments of the Government were reorganised from once The annual allotment for education alone rose from 5 to 13 lakhs during the

period, and the total expenditure from 44 to 67 lakhs". Next to the finances, agriculture and industries claimed his close attention. The development of medical aid and sanitation was also of prime importance to him.

The inspiring words with which His Highness opened the Legislative Council bear repetition: "It has ever been my earnest desire to associate my people in an increasing measure with the Government of the State, and I feel happy that that desire has this day been fulfilled The attempt to devise a suitable scheme, harmonising various shades of conflicting thoughts, has made some delay inevitable I sincerely trust that the calmness, wisdom and sobriety which will characterise your deliberations will fully justify my expectations and that the promotion of the happiness and prosperity of all classes of my beloved subjects will be your constant endeavour." His Highness warmly encouraged the development of the co-operative societies, the village panchayat system and of the municipal councils. And the honours which he conferred on his subjects on the occasion of His Highness' 70th birthday were of a liberal nature and had far-reaching effects. In all His Highness' varied activities, he had the earnest sympathy and, wherever possible and necessary, the willing co-operation of His Highness' consort, Sri-mathi Parukutty Nethyaramma. Theirs was 'one of those bridal beds made in Heaven'. Her training and attainments, her noble simplicity, gracious manner and ready tact, and, above all, her abiding faith in the Mother Goddess, helped her to maintain her exalted position with ease and dignity. An erudite Nampathiripad and an illiterate woman from the village part, the old and the young, an orthodox Brahmin and a heterodox member of the so-called depressed class, will feel themselves equally at home in her presence. It is a study to see her receiving their and making

them feel happy. But she will not allow any levity. A look or a word will recall the erring visitor to a sense of decency and dignity and to the fact that he or she is in the presence of one of the greatest, best and blameless ladies of Malabar. There is no acting about it all; it comes so natural to her.

She is ever open to the light of reason; but when once she makes up her mind on any subject, the firm high resolve will remain, and she will consecrate it into action in the face of adverse talk, in the teeth of clenched antagonism.

She does not care for the acts of those 'that feed while they can and sting when they can feed no more'. She is conscious that her high position must necessarily expose her to all manner of talk She knows it well; and so nothing deviates from her appointed task.

The third of the three Rulers was rightly given the title of *Dharmika Chakravarthi* at an All-Hindu Conference of Hindu leaders and pandits. He was a saintly ruler. He never posed himself as a great statesman; but on the fundamentals rights and duties of a constitutional ruler he had a good hold, and would firmly stand by them. Before he affixed his signature to any important document, he would pray to his family deity that it may turn out to be beneficial to his subjects over whose welfare he had a fatherly concern. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was retained by the State to advocate its cause before the Indian Government in connection with the final settlement of certain major disputes linked with the Cochin Harbour. His Highness too had gone to Delhi about that time. When the draft of the agreement was handed over to His Highness by Sir Sapru, His Highness quietly said in his usual characteristic fashion, "നിഷ്കർഷാർത്ഥമായി വാക്കുക പരിശോധനയില്ല. നൽകേണ്ടതാകുന്നു. വാക്കി വേണ്ടപ്രാബല്യമാക്കിയിട്ടു. ഭക്തി, പരമം, അനുകൂലം": വാക്കുവെച്ചു. ആ ഭക്തിയെപ്പറ്റി വായിക്കാം. വിട്ടു

കൊടുത്തു; പിന്നെ, അതിൽനിന്നുള്ള വിവരം എന്താണെന്നു മനസ്സിലാക്കുവാൻ തോന്നിപ്പോയി അദ്ദേഹം അങ്ങനെയെന്നു.

"I have no great knowledge about these matters. It is enough if you all look into them and make them all right. But there are two points on which I am keen: the sovereignty of that ground should at no time be relinquished; then, the share of the profit to the State should not be altered, whenever they think and in whatever way they like," and returned the copy to him. At this confession of confidence and the religious fervour with which it was delivered, and, above all, at the enunciation of the two most important principles, the great lawyer statesman Sir Sapru expressed his grateful admiration, and revised the draft in consonance with His Highness' wishes. Then he received it and signed by saying "എന്റെ പൂർണ്ണതൃപ്തിക്കു കാരണമായത്." (Let my Poorna-thraaseen aspect this).

His Highness was very keen on adopting measures to relieve agriculturists and others who were burdened with heavy debts. The constitution of the Staff Selection Board, the extension of facilities for the supply of good drinking water to outlying seaboard areas, the beautifying of the towns of Ernakulam and Trichur, and the introduction of electric lights there and in certain other places of the State form a few of the major events of his rule. But according to some politicians, the outstanding act of his was the sanction given for the Government Cochin Act, by which Cochin is given a power. His minister to administer a few of its departments for raising the Chief Court into a High Court. May connection with the inauguration of this new institution, the Diwan wrote to me, on 1938. Diwan contribute a brief article on "The Diwans of for a special issue of a Madras Daily. That paper and published it in the *Research* that, but *Research Bulletin*. That article, which I up."

in as an appendix to this book, will save me the task of writing about the Diwans whose names I have listed at the beginning of this chapter.

In the previous chapter, I have stated that the mother of the abdicated Raja and my mother were great friends, His Highness' brother H. H. Kerala Varma, and my elder brother were intimate friends; while another brother of his H. H. Ravi Varma, have, from our school-days, honoured me with his confidence and friendship. On 4-3-1939, on our way from Chittur, where, on the kind invitation of our friends Mr. and Mrs. Pattathil Padmanabha Menon, my wife and myself had been to spend two days with them, we halted at Trichur. My friend, Dr. A. K. Menon, told me that he proposed to go for his lunch to Kanattukaray as that day happened to be the birthday of H. H. Ravi Varma. I said I too would go with him. "That will give H. H. immense pleasure," he said. So it did. My uninvited presence overwhelmed him with joy. "A welcome guest though unexpected here", so he told those about him, and turning to me he said, "Aniya! we must celebrate the Golden Jubilee of our friendship." On 11-7-11-19, his son, Mr. Narayana Marar, wrote to me thus: "I am glad to inform you that father is improving though slowly . . .

He firmly believes that your sincere prayers cannot but be efficacious . . . I want to tell you that it was

rather a pride for me to receive a letter from you, in one whom my father used to refer as his eldest

best friend, one who was also a student and teacher of my revered uncle and father-in-law . . ."

My last reference is to my master, Mr. K. Narayana

In the face of a few of the aforesaid facts,

I first went to pay my respects to His Highness-abdicated Ruler at the Hill Palace. I was

His Highness was very busy. I wanted to

matter there, because I knew that both my

and my two brothers-in-law; according to

them, had suffered at his hands. Naturally, I thought that I too was being punished for the alleged sins of my close relatives. But, Mr. Kuppakkad Govinda Menon would not permit me to rest quiet until I tried once again. So, just to honour him, I assayed a second time when His Highness halted at Ernakulam on his way to Coonoor. I got the same reply. It was after this incident that Mr. Banerji and, after him, His Highness were invited to the Rama Varma Club. His Highness had a brilliant reception there. The President of Club, Mr. Narayana Marar, introduced me to His Highness as the Secretary when, no doubt, he spoke to me nicely for some time. That was on 29-2-1911. A year after that function, on 8-2-1912 to be more precise, there was a Garden Party on the Durbar Hall Grounds. Just as it was drawing to a close, and the time was getting dark, and while Mr. A. B. Salem and myself were walking up and down and talking, Mr. Banerji came up to us and said to me, 'You have been trying to catch your eye for the last year. — Try an hour, but you were leaving me severely alone by looking the other way.' I explained to him that I laboured under a congenital 'squir' which, perhaps, was responsible for the wrong impression. Then, he asked Mr. Salem's leave to have me for a minute, and took me apart, and we had this bit of talk between us, which I was careful to record in my diary.

Mr. Banerji — "Have you paid your respects to His Highness?"

I — (was taken aback by this abrupt question). "May I know whether or not you ask me as the Diwan or Mr. Banerji?"

Mr. Banerji — "As your well-wisher."

I — "Thank you. Twice I tried to do that, but could not get the chance. So, I gave it up."

Mr. Banerji — "I wish you will do so on an early day."

I — "I trust I shall not get the same answer as the one that I had on the two previous occasions."

Mr. Banerji — "Then both of us will have cause to regret our error, I suppose."

I — "I shall follow your advice for which I thank you." I was about to leave him, when he continued:

Mr. Banerji — "I have not finished with you. How is it that you have not seen me as yet?"

I — "I am only a District Court Pleader, and I had no occasion to appear before you."

Banerji — (laughed). "I wish you will come and see me now and then."

I thanked him and joined Mr. Salem.

A few days after this talk, I paid a respectful visit to His Highness the Raja. Very kindly, His Highness treated me; he talked to me on various matters; and, on taking leave, he asked me to go and see him frequently. Then, on 1912-2-18, my wife and myself visited Mr. and Mrs. Banerji. We had a warm welcome from them. They were keen on being told about the past history of Cochin, its language and literature. They gave us a standing invitation for their Sunday tea-party. Thereafter, my visits to the Ruler and the Diwan were frequent; they gave me full leave to talk and write to them on matters connected with the welfare of the State, especially when they found that my suggestions were considered ones and were meant entirely for the benefit of the country. Once His Highness wrote to me: "I think you know me too well to require an assurance that I always like free talking; however delicate the

subject matter of the same may be. I need therefore hardly say that your fear of offending me for saying frankly what you had in your mind was groundless." I felt very happy in those days to realise that His Highness liked me, and took an interest even in my personal affairs. These extracts from a few of his letters will, I dare say, bare out what I have said, and convince even a cynic that there is a basis for my statement. "15-6-1913. I have much pleasure to receive your letter of 30th Edavam and thank you for the kind offer of your service for any help my son may require. He is going to Ernakulam to-day, and I have instructed him not to hesitate to ask you for help, whenever he stands in need of it." "16-1-17. Your wife has, no doubt, had a very narrow escape. When Dr. Ramunni Menon told me about the nature of her trouble, I felt a great deal of anxiety. When I saw him again, I was glad to learn from him that she was progressing well and out of danger. This was a great relief to me. I hope she is quite all right by this time." "25-8-1924. I am delighted to hear of the success of your son at Cambridge and of your daughter in the Honours examination in Sanskrit. I think you have reason to be proud of them both."

Once when my daughter wrote to me about the difficulty she had in studying and getting by heart the grammatical *sūtras*, I sought the advice of her teacher here, Mr. Rama Pisharoti. He happened to speak about this subjects to His Highness, who then told Mr. Pisharoti to ask me to write to her that he himself still continued to repeat the *sūtras* on certain early mornings so that he might keep himself in touch with them.

"28-9-1913. I am very glad to receive your letter of yesterday and to see from it that your nephew has reached London and is well. I hope he will join the college as early as possible and get on with his studies satisfactorily Owing to growing age the

desire for peace and rest is gaining ground upon me steadily. I, however, trust that I shall be able to go on with my work for some time longer." This latter reference is about his retirement. Of that I got a hint, on an earlier date, from another quarter. When I broached the subject to His Highness, this talk ensued:

H. H. — Who gave you this information?

I.—I pray I may be pardoned for keeping it to myself

H. H.—(with a smile) I know the culprit.

I. — I pray then that he too may be pardoned. For, his idea was that I too may try to delay the step if I cannot prevent it. He also knew that the information would be safe with me.

H. H.—I have no doubt of it. You have your vacations and other days of rest. But, for the last 18 years, I have not known what it is to rest. There has been only change of work. I think my people will allow me some time to rest and pray before the close of my life here."

When I was checkmated like that, what could I say, how could I press him still to stick on? But the funny part of the matter is that, when the Government Gazette announced his intention to abdicate, there were wisacrees to suggest that it was not a voluntary act but was a ~~dictated~~ ^{dictated} surrender! I have seen letters of both Lord Anphtil and Lord Curzen which would show beyond doubt that they were against his abdicating the mousnud and that they advised him, and pressed him not to do it. "His Highness abdicated at 12—50 p. m. on 7-13-1914. He controlled his feelings admirably and read out his speech boldly." So runs my Diary, which refers to another episode as well. Soon after the people's address and the speech of His Highness, Mr. P. Gopala Menon suddenly began to give o a Malayalam version of both. That item was not in the

programme; and, before evening, I got a note from his highness to explain this deviation. I replied regretting the incident and stating that it was not stopped so as not to mar the solemnity of the function. But I have to go back.

During the early years of his reign, His Highness got down Mr. P. Rajagopala Chari as his Diwan. He was then young and was only an Assistant Collector in the British Service. Evidently he came with the ill-conceived idea that Cochin had an antediluvian administration and that there were no capable men in Cochin. On account of some of his steps, not well considered, there was much heart-burning in the State.

To show the trend of opinion that prevailed among the educated, intelligent men, I shall quote from a letter of Mr. K. Rama Menon, dated 17th November 1899.

"I have been told by Mr. Kupakut Govinda Menon that the symptoms of your eye-disease have taken a somewhat alarming turn and that you have begun to lose hope of immediate cure May I suggest that you should lose no time to start for Madras and to give the English mode of treatment another and a fairer trial? In Madras, on the other hand you have men who may be expected to do for you all that the most advanced science and the most skilled practice is capable of effecting. It would be the greatest calamity for any one to lose one's eye. And in your case, it would further be the blasting of a life which has given promise to render eminent service to our country."

"Coming next to matters which are more remotely personal, permit me to ask you, as I often ask myself, if we are wise in silently submitting to the tyranny of the present administration. I will weigh my words before putting them on paper; and if you ask me to justify the use of the word 'tyranny', I might

categorically set forth a number of acts of the present administration whose manifest tendency is despotic. What are we to say about the recent subjection of the Judiciary to the Executive? (Vide the financial Code, re the power of the Diwan to fine the Zillah judges). What are we to say about the barring of the right of those whose lands have been acquired for the purpose of the railway, to resort to a Civil tribunal in cases where the Revenue authorities have appraised the improvements unfairly? How will you characterise the recent circular of the Diwan conferring on himself final authority to interpret the Financial Code? When we have no voice in the Legislation of the State, no right of interpellating the Executive, no control over the purse of the State, no public organ to ventilate our grievances, is it not, I ask, throwing the last straw on the camel's back to take away from the Courts of Justice even the semblance of independence? What again, are we to say about the systematic attempt which is being made to pauperize our State. In the name of railway, how many empty alien purses are being filled? In the name of organisation how many alien mouths are being fed? This is not the place to enter into details. What I am driving at is sufficiently clear."

Mr. Banerji's advent as Diwan was a godsend to Cochin. He resurrected the memory of great men like D. Wang Sankara Warriar and Sankunni Menon, and the solid work they had done to the State. Without creating any violent break in the continuity of the past, he gave a modern tone to the administration, tried to encourage indigenous talent to the utmost, and to strengthen the cord of sympathy between the Ruler and the ruled. Social functions and industrial and agricultural exhibitions he organised. The financial outlook of the railway and the tram was carefully gone into as to correct errors and to convert them into concerns profitable to Cochin. The terms

of the interportal convention that lay dormant after the days of Diwan Sankunni Menon were revived and were made to yield a substantial yearly income to the coffers of the State. He followed a policy of relentless financial economy. He invited and welcomed advice from all intelligent and disinterested quarters, and felt grateful when he really got it.

He worked very hard, so that none could lodge the complaint against him that he took his official life easy while he compelled others to work. He was a master of details, and there was pregnant vigour in his proceedings. There was at one time a talk among some heads of departments that he shut his eyes to the faults of European officers. When I brought this to his notice, he said with some wariness that the idea was entirely unbounded, that the defecting men had received a blow from him the mark of which would remain with them all their lives.

He advised Mr. Narayana Marar and others not to keep away from His Highness but to utilise every opportunity to get into contact with him, so as to enable His Highness to evaluate the capacity and intelligence of his own subjects and to remove the estrangement that had slowly crept in between His Highness and the educated people of the State. The function at the Rama Varma Union Club too was one of the results of his hint. All this produced a wonderful effect in the official atmosphere. It made the Diwan's road easy to assist native talents. Mr. V. K. Sankara Menon, Mr. M. A. Chakko, Mr. E. K. Ayyakkutty came to their own. He wanted Mr. K. Rama Menon to rise in this tide and to reach a very high position, the highest if possible. But Mr. Rama Menon and his advisors stemmed the current of his rise, and he resigned his place. Both Mr. Banerji and Mr. Narayana Marar asked me to request Mr. Rama Menon not to take that hasty step. I did my best, and even assured him, on behalf of Mr. Banerji,

that the point for which my friend stood out would be respected and acted up to in the course of six months. The procedure which Mr. Rama Menon then adopted greatly disappointed Mr. Banerji and his real well-wishes. In a letter, dated 27-11-1914 from London, where Mr. Banerji went after retirement from the Indian Civil Service, he referred to this subject. "I am very glad to hear that Mr. Rama Menon is going to Travancore, for I think he is better outside the State than within it both for himself as well as for his native country. I often think that it was a great mistake on my part to have brought him over from Madras, although at the time I was actuated by the motive of giving the best encouragement possible to all Cochin men outside. But Rama Menon's temperament is such that he will be able to give his best intellect and his best work to the Government totally unconnected with his native land and amidst surroundings which are not likely to ruffle his temper or to influence his judgment." There is some pathetic truth in what Sir Banerji has stated. I fear that, in spite of his attainments and the high position to which he rose, he has not made any tangible contribution to the civic life of his country. He did not join the Cochin Mahajanasabha, nor any Nair Samajam. Why? he even refused to become a member of the Bar Association, so that when his friend, Mr. A. Sankara Menon, presented an oil painting of him to be placed in the Association Hall, there was a mild protest against receiving it for that institution. So that what remain to remind of him and of his acute intellect are a few outstanding judgments in the Law Reports of Cochin and Travancore.

Mr. Rama Menon led more or less a studious life. He never liked social life very much. For, if he had, he and Mr. Banerji would have often met and become friends. Mr. Banerji's Saturday tennis-parties attracted many men of light and leading in the State.

Even His Highness the Raja occasionally came to play and to grace the function. A few such as H. H. Appan Thampuran, Mr. and Mrs. Davis, Mr. Kupakadi Govinda Menon, Mr. Kochugovinda Marar were permanent fixtures. From Ernakulam, Dr. Coombes used to go frequently, and myself once in a month or two. After tennis and when others had gone home or to the Billiard Room, I used to have a short talk with him, in which, at times Mr. Marar also joined us.

When Mr. Banerji realised that we two never indulged in communal talks, nor pressed to his notice personal matters, but placed before him only such subjects that required his consideration for the welfare of the country, he gave us freedom to talk without any reserve. Once he wrote to me, "Of course you can come and see me any time you like, without making a formal appointment." But I never took undue advantage of this privilege, and had, now and again, to be mildly coerced to attend these parties at Trichur. Of course, I never hesitated to go to him when any business of the country claimed my attention. "All I can wish is", so he wrote to me on 28-12-1913, "that you may continue to take the same interest in public affairs as you have done hitherto, and show to your country a noble example of disinterested advocacy of every good cause." I can say without any trace of doubt that, after the days of Diwan Sankunni Menon no one has worked for Cochin so well as Mr. Banerji. His *Record of Administration* will, I dare say, support this statement of mine. I shall just jot down a few lines from some of his letters to show the genuine interest he took in the affairs of Cochin even after he left it. "It is difficult for me to detach myself from the State which I have served so long and with such whole-heartedness. It will take me a long time to realise that my hands are not on the driving machinery." "I hope you will occasionally write to me and keep me informed

of what is going on in the State. How does the Tenancy Legislation stand now?" "Will you kindly send me a copy of the Cochin Mahajana Sabha's protest against the Tramway extension scheme? I wonder if you could let me have a copy of the memorandum which has been sent by the Cochin State to the Government of India on the Cochin harbour." The memorandum I could not send him because the reference was not specific enough, and so I could only convey his request to the Diwan's secretary; but with a copy of the protest I was able to furnish him. The protest was dated 9.3.1923 and was in the form of a memorial addressed to the Diwan about "the proposed Tramway Scheme" which covered the extension of the Tramway beyond the territorial limits of the State and the development of the Sholayar Valley. "The prospectus," the Sabha remarked, "reads like one of a commercial undertaking rather than of a scheme to the development of the resources of the State". The Sabha objected to the introduction of foreign capital, the co-operation of an outside agency and the co-ordination of another Government.

"The Central idea of the proposed scheme would appear to be to find out the means of averting the impending loss to the State of the booked capital of 19 lakhs invested on existing Tramway line

"The Sabha is as solicitous as if not more than the Government to see to the successful solution of this problem, and to relieve this State from the embarrassing circumstances of a scheme (the original Tramway scheme), presumably planned under expert advice, and carried out with care and economy, a scheme which purported to fetch an annual recurring income of about 3 lakhs of rupees, but which has landed the State in a loss of about 10 lakhs of rupees, the depletion of its valuable timber, and in a predicament whence the only alternatives of escape seem to be either the sale of rails, rolling stock and all for

whatever these may fetch or the proposed expenditure of another 10 lakhs of rupees." His Highness advised Diwan Mr. Bhore to avoid the error of Mr. Rajagopalachari; and so the scheme was not acted upon.

Mr. Banerji revealed his master who, on his part, placed entire confidence in his minister. His personal regard for the Ruler was conspicuously present at the time of the completion of the 60th year of His Highness. He openly and warmly co-operated with the people to make the *shaktyabdarparthi* celebrations a success. At a public meeting of the people from all parts of the State, it was resolved to raise a statue of His Highness. Along with Messrs. Doraswamy Iyer, C. Achyutha Menon and others, Mr. P. Krishna Menon and myself were on the Working Committee. We two had to visit Cochin, Cranganore, Trichur and Wadakkancherry to stimulate the local committees therein their collection work. It was through Mr. Banerji's assistance that the Committee was able to get the statue neatly executed by a great London sculptor. "I am glad to learn from your kind note of the 13th (October 1915) that the unveiling ceremony of my statue has gone off without any hitch. It is sad that it had to remain covered for a long time even after its erection on the spot. The delay has, I think proved an advantage, for you could get such an important person to do the uncton. I am anxious to see the statue and hope to have an early opportunity of doing so."

Both His Highness and his subjects highly appreciated the work of Mr. Banerji. Once in a letter of his, he touched on this topic: "It is very gratifying — in fact the highest reward a man can have is to find that those for whom one works appreciate and approve what is done. I shall always gratefully remember this noble trait in the character of the Cochinites."

Yet, at the public meeting held on 14-2-1914 in the Sircar High School at Trichur, to concert measures

to give a send-off to Mr. & Mrs. Banerji, there were four or five persons from Ernakulam to voice their protest against that course. One spoke of the curtailment of the powers of the judiciary and the nomination of a friend of his to the Ernakulam Town Council, another against the introduction of the Arms Act into Cochin, a third deplored the want of water in Trichur, while a fourth complained against the assessment of Devaswom lands, while a fifth, a barrister, remarked on the want of courtesy to vakils.

To blame Mr. Banerji for the curtailment of the Judicial Authority was just like punishing Popes for the wrongs of the Caesars.

The Arms Act was not a special feature to Cochin, every student of modern Indian history knew. That one, one of whose great achievements was the introduction of the Alware water into Ernakulam, should be blamed for the scarcity of water in Trichur by a vakil resident in Ernakulam would have been generous if his motive was pure; and if he had known the correct facts, he would not have ventured on that baseless attack. Why the Devaswom lands alone should remain unassessed, the speaker did not explain. It was nothing but a false calumny to revert to want of politeness to vakils on the part of one who did much to raise the level of the lawyer's status and to give them a local habitation.

They were left severely alone to enjoy their self-satisfied ambition: for it was thought that a generous silence was the noblest answer to them and to their biased remarks. But let it be remembered to the honour of Mr. Banerji that these were the only complaints which all the perspicacity of malice was able to fix upon his official life.

"The Farewell Entertainment to Mr. Banerji and his wife", notes my diary of 26-1-1914, "was a splendid success. The opposition of a handful made

it all the more better." On 5-3-1914, Mr. Banerji thus wrote to me from the Tulloch's Gardens, Madras, 'Free from the cares of office, I write now to thank you for all your kind deeds and thoughts about us. The parting last Monday will never fade from our memories, and our thoughts will continue to travel to Cochin and her people wherever we go.'

When, in the December of 1940, he revisited Cochin, after an interval of a quarter of a century, he was kind enough to enquire for me, to visit me and to write to me in these felicitous terms; "I enjoyed your tea-party very much. The whole reminded me of old days. I was so glad to see such a happy family." 30-11-1940. Mr. K. Achyutha Menon, Secretary to Government, came and told me that one of the few about whom he asked him was myself, and advised me to go and see him at once. As soon as he saw me, he came to me and said, "I am glad P. K. that you are alive to meet me. I am so happy to see you. Sit down. Let us have a long talk." I asked him to rest a while, to which he replied, "I shall rest only after we finish our talk." Then, for an hour and a quarter we went on talking on men and matters he was anxious to be informed. When, to make him take some rest, I abruptly got up, he said, "We must meet again. I shall come over. Never stop working hard. That keeps me up. You are looking wonderfully well for your age."

2-12-1940. "Mr. Banerji came for tea. Mr. P. Sankaran Nambiyar and Mr. K. Achyuta Menon were asked to join us. As Dr. A. R. Menon said that he had not met and talked with Mr. Banerji, he also formed of the party, besides my wife and sons. He remained with us for very near two hours. Dr. A. R. Menon spoke to me of him in glowing terms. When Sir Banerji took leave, he said to my wife, "Mrs. Krishna Menon, you have miraculously withstood the ravages of time. Hope you will do so for many years to

come." With these welcome words, I shall proceed to the next reign.

24-12-1914. Paid my respects to the new Ruler. He has a magnanimous presence. I saw the Consort as well. She seemed to me to be a great, capable lady. I see both of them for the first time. But both treated me with great kindness. The Consort wanted my wife to go to her on an early day. I told Mr. P. Damodara Menon that Uchir expected much from him as His Highness's Sarvadhikariakar.

11-1-1915. Public meeting to respectfully congratulate His Highness the new Raja. The same persons who signed for Mr. Banerji's Garden-party meeting issued the notice for this one. Mr. C. Achyuta Menon presided. I was asked to be the Secretary and Treasurer of the Committee appointed at the meeting.

The installation took place on the 21st. of January, and, on the 22nd, there was a Government Garden Party. His Highness and the Diwan moved freely among the guests. Mr. Bhore said that I must attend his Saturday parties. "Take leave from Court and come, but come you must," he said with a smile.

Though I had not the privilege of knowing His Highness the Raja before he came to the musnud, yet it did not take me long to realize that His Highness and the Consort Sy. Parukuttu Nethyaramma, were taking a personal interest in the welfare of my wife and myself, and placing great confidence in me. My reverence and my devotion to them and my attention to carry out even their slightest wish must have shown them that I gratefully appreciated their kindness to me. Once Mr. P. Damodara Menon, Sarvadhikariakar, wrote to me that His Highness had asked him, more than once, why I had not gone to the Hill Palace to receive the Onam and Vishu presents, and advised me to go over on the next occasion. I did, but only once did I go and that on an Onam day.

The Vishu present I received once or twice from Coonoor. Similarly, I participated in the birthday feast also two or three times. During the reign of the abdicated Ruler, I never went for any one of these. After retirement, His Highness stopped in the Krishnavilas Palace for a short time. Then, on 1915-1-2, he sent his Private Secretary, Mr. S. Chari, particularly to ask me to go over there to lunch. "Only half-a-dozen are invited. His Highness will certainly expect you," he said. That was the first occasion when I attended a function of that nature. To be in a large party is a strain to me. I feel at home in a small company of congenial friends. But an attendance at a large party completely unnerves me; and if it also means eating anything, it upsets my weak stomach as well. That is why I rarely attend large functions and feasts. My friends know my weakness and generally excuse my absence. Gradually, I made His Highness understand this physical defect of mine, and His Highness realised my position and sympathised with me.

His Highness talked to me without reserve on all possible subjects. He graciously gave me advice on purely personal matters, such, for instance, as the investment of my earnings and cure of my health. As Sir T. Vijayaraghava Chari correctly observed to me once, "His Highness conveys his commands and advice in a Socratic method. You have to watch his words carefully not to miss his meaning." I have never seen His Highness in an angry or ruffled temper; he was always calm and collected. The touching concern he evinced in the welfare of even his menial servants recall a whole history of his greatness, goodness and charity.

His Highness was a student of Spencer. At times, he would make me suspect he was an agnostic at heart. "The act of worshipping in the temple", once His Highness remarked to me, "has a tonic

effect. The spectacular side of the temples here has to be developed so as to leave a marked impression on those who go to the temples." But the Consort has ever been a staunch devotee of the Mother Goddess; and, daily, every morning, she devoted at least two hours for worship, meditation and religious studies.

No ruler of Cochin, within living memory, enjoyed the felicity of domestic happiness as well as he. That is why perhaps his love for his country was healthy and vigorous. For that instinct is but an enlargement of the feelings that clings to one's family. He was a grand patriot of the broad and informed type. No caste or craft or selfish consideration obliterated the foundation on which his love for his land rested.

27-1-1917. His Highness discussed with me about the composition for the Nayar Regulation Committee, and about the nature of the work of the Malayalam Improvement Committee. He wants me to submit a memorandum on the latter subject so as to improve both the quantity and the quality of its work. He asked me to make my visits to the Hill Palace more frequent than now. Both His Highness and the Consort enquired after the health of my wife and children. Consort wanted me to send Kalyani with her to Coonor to make her strong and healthy.

29-7-1917. Long audience. His Highness specially directed his talk to matters concerning the Nayar Regulation, Malayalam Literature, Educational and Judicial Departments and Cochin politics in general formed the other topics of the talk. I was agreeably surprised to find the ease and facility with which His Highness quoted from Tujan, Kunjan and Venmani and to hear informing criticisms about certain living poets.

The interest His Highness took in the work of the Nayar Regulation Committee will also be seen from two letters I had from His Highness, dated

24-9-1917 and 9-7-1933.

"With much pleasure do I note also your promise in regard to what you have to do as a member of the Nair Committee. I have no doubt that you will devote your attention with that earnestness which the work demands."

"I do not clearly follow the distinction you make between the exhibitions held here in India and those in the European countries. I should like to know what is being done with the exhibits in those countries so as to utilise them as "more educative and advertising agencies"

"I am glad to note that the Nair Regulation Committee is making satisfactory progress in its work, and hope that it will be able to complete the enquiry in regard to this important question before long. I am also glad that you enjoyed your visits to Kinnamkulam, Pazhayannur etc. I have visited some of the places, and it has afforded me much pleasure to do so."

24-3-1918. His Highness and Consort asked me to see them after the Chittur sittings of the Nayar Regulation Committee for consultation in connection with the tali-tying ceremony of their daughters. I am not so vain as to take them seriously; none the less, I shall obey their order, as even their lightest wish it is a pleasure to carry out."

During the days of the ceremony, I was asked to accommodate Prof. Gunduth, Mr. (Sir) Chettur Madhava Nayar and Mr. Mammath Govindan Nayar in my place and to look after their comforts, and to accompany them to the Hill Palace.

29-6-1918. His Highness spoke to me about the Forest tram, and the suggestion of the Malayalam Improvement Committee regarding the conferment of titles on literary men on the occasion of His Highness' *Shashthyabdayoorthi*. He deplored the absence

of one near him with whom he could consult on important matters. Enjoined me to be frequent in my visits, and said that I could order a car whenever I wanted it. Very kind of His Highness.

19-8-1918. Consort was also present when I paid my respects to His Highness. Talked over matters connected with the completion of His Highness' 60th year. Consort wants to start a *Bhajana-mattham* at Trichur. Both His Highness and the Consort fully agreed with my suggestion that a school to teach *Ayurveda* and *Visha-vidya* in His Highness' name will be a fitting memorial of the occasion. The starting of the Legislative Council was touched upon. Leave was graciously given me to dedicate a collection of hymns to His Highness. His Highness expressed the difficulty he has begun to experience in pulling on with Diwans not in sympathy with the view of His Highness.

But, he allowed no obstacle to stand in the way of his work for the many-sided advancement of Cochin. In every direction he was able to make substantial contributions to the development of the country and its people. Barring a few chronic grumblers, the rest of his subjects appreciated his solid endowment to the State. The Paramount Power too was not behind in appreciating the great qualities of the Ruler. As a hereditary honour, the title of Maharaja was conferred on His Highness by the Imperial Government. A meeting of the representatives of the people in all parts of the State was held in the Collage Hall to voice the unbounded joy the people felt on this conferment, to convey their gratitude to the Indian Government, and their congratulations to His Highness.

His Highness had five Diwans during his reign. They were Messrs. J. W. Bhore, T. Vijayaraghava Chari, P. Narayana Menon, T. S. Narayana Iyer and C. G. Herbert. With all these I moved on very amicable terms, particularly with the first two and

the last. Mr. Narayana Iyer all through worked in complete unison with the wishes of His Highness. Mr. Herbert, His Highness thought, had come to Cochin with a bias against him; while the three others began, during the close of their respective careers, to acutely differ from His Highness on certain important matters.

Mr. Bhore had, in his time, difficult days to encounter. "Probably, some few people realise that the year 1090", as he himself wrote to me, "with the war, the abdication, installation visits of distinguished guests, constituted a year of such strenuousness, that few of its predecessors can compare with it, and no doubt some also will realise that the tackling of a problem like the Forest tramway is sufficient to tax the full powers and time of a Diwan for a good many years." Again, on another occasion, he wrote to me, "I have certain work which I consider I have to do in Cochin for the benefit of its people. No one will hurry me one jot in my task. But I hope to do it or at any rate to see it on the road to accomplishment before I go". In his efforts to be useful to the State, he had the willing help of its capable and accomplished partner. Mrs. Bhore is an M. B. of the Edinburgh University. She was tireless in her work, and had a charming smile about her that disarmed criticism and won cooperation from others in the performance of her numerous duties. Her powers of organisation was marvellous. Without any reserve, I placed my humble services at their disposal; and they knew that they could count on me for unstinted assistance.

Mrs. Bhore liked my wife very much. The first time she came to us was, I believe, on 24-10-1914; and that was in connection with a garden party she wanted to arrange in honour of Lady Pentland. After that, now and then, she would come, especially if she heard of any illness to my wife or my daughter. She was so nice to us. Long after, when Sir and Lady

THE DAYS THAT WERE

Bhore visited Cochin in the December of 1930, we two were invited to lunch with them. It was a small party and my wife was the only Indian lady present. 11-9-1914. "I would like to talk over with you the present situation to see if anything can be done to assist the Government action to relieve such pressure as there may be on certain sections of the population." "8-2-1915, I thank you very much for your reply to my letters of the 6th and 9th January, and shall consider the suggestions that you have made in regard to the two questions on which I consulted you." These are extracts from Mr. Bhore's letters. He wanted my views on the material, social and moral condition of the Pulayas of the State, and also in what direction its improvement was possible. The other question was connected with the Primary education, the pay of the Primary-school teachers, and if the reduction from 5 to 4 years of the Primary department "would result in advantage to parents and students without detracting from the efficiency of the education imparted." "2-10-1916. I was expecting you on Saturday, and was disappointed you could not come. I shall be glad to see you at 4.30 p.m. next Wednesday. If you come prepared for tennis, I may have a game as I have not played for many weeks."

In war work, it was wholly in their hands: in preparing or translating leaflets for publication about war loans and the nature of the work the people were expected to do, and in conducting sales and in getting articles ready for the benefit of the soldiers.

14-5-1917. The Secretary to the Diwan has sent to me, as directed by the Diwan, a dialogue on war loan, to be rendered into Malayalam. 14-9-1917. Mr. M. I. Varkey, Diwan's Secretary, sends me, for perusal and return, Mrs. Bhore's appeal to our ladies for pickles and chutneys for the Indian troops. He says that it is sent to me as my wife is at Trichur. He wants my suggestion and cooperation.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Bhore knew that even in rural areas, the people were literate and that they kept themselves in touch with the progress of the war. So, no money was spent on war publicity work, and no paid propagandists were appointed to go about collecting people to make speeches to. His Highness and the Diwan were against appealing to the poor people and to the low-paid officers for contributions for war purposes. Mrs. Bhore organised, in 1917, a fete and bazaar in Ernakulam, and got up an entertainment at Trichur in 1918 in aid of the war funds. For the latter I could not go. "1-9-1918. I am so sorry that you were not at the entertainment last evening, if for no other reason than to witness your daughter's Portia. She did admirably and you would have been proud of her. I think the whole thing was enjoyable and a great success." "That is from Mrs. Bhore. Mr. Bhore was equally generous to my dear Janaky. 10-9-1918. I must congratulate Mrs. Krishna Menon and yourself on the very good representation of Portia which your daughter gave at the recent entertainment at Trichur."

To make the "Sales" at Ernakulam a success, my wife and myself worked hard for days as personal assistants of Mrs. Bhore. About it, Mrs. Bhore wrote to me thus on December 12: "..... It is absolutely true that without your and Mrs. Krishna Menon's help, even with that of Mrs. Kholoff and others, I could never have coped with the number of articles which we found ourselves with. I do hope that Mrs. Krishna Menon has completely got over her indisposition following the fete, and I want to give you both my whole-hearted thanks. I was not surprised at your business capacity, because one expects it in a man; but it was a revelation to me to find an Indian lady work so quietly and so effectively as if she had been doing that sort of work all her life, as Mrs. Krishna Menon did. I had known how clever and intellectual

she was; but did not suspect these other talents. We shall be delighted to see you in Trichur if you do not go to Madras." Both of them were very kind to us. So too were Mr. T. Vijayaraghava Chari, the next Diwan, and his wife and children. Mr. Vijayaraghava Chari possessed a buoyant disposition. His natural wisdom was illimitable, and his humour touched every occasion with its clarifying and humanising influence. He was, if I may use the expression, generous to a fault, so that even cheats, in the garb of broken down beggars, were benefitted by his charity. The outbreak of plague in Mattancherry, the scarcity of rice all over the State, and the Trichur Riots, tried to affect his equanimity; but it triumphed over them.

To put the town and the godowns in a satisfactory, sanitary condition and to engender confidence in the minds of the panic-stricken people, he used to visit Mattancherry almost twice every day. He worked so effectively that it did not give time for the disease to spread, and to live even in the bazaar long.

As to how he tackled the rice problem, this letter will show.

Springfield,
6th June 1919.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 30th May which reached me here on my return from Trichur. The rice situation — it is very good of you to have written to me about it — had already attracted my notice. I went down to Trichur and arranged (1) to issue a notification fixing maximum selling prices of local paddy and rice and (2) to open a Sircar depot for sale of local paddy with stock commandeered from the mills at the above rates to the poor who may not be able to exact grain at proper rates from the merchants. (3) I have also telegraphed to Madras for as much of Burma rice as they can send me. The difficulty

is inadequate shipping between Madras coast and Burma. (4) I have also arranged to open relief works to give labour to the unemployed throughout the State. A list of such works has been called for and I hope to start them by the 16th instant when we will all be in Ernakulam. (5) I have also opened at Trichur a trial poor house for giving kanji to the absolutely destitute, the infirm and the aged.

Kindly criticise the above measures and make any suggestions you like. I want all the non-official co-operation I can get, and propose to appeal for it the moment I come down. A false alarm is not half so bad as a sense of fancied security.

Yours very sincerely,
Sd. T. Vijayaraghava Chari.

In a note of 5-8-1919, he wrote, Mr. Dornswamy Iyer, yourself and Mr. Kochunni Menon have been very good to one who is a comparative stranger, and I feel thankful for meeting with so much kindness."

At about this time, I had a letter, dated 29-8-19, from Mr. J. T. Gwynn, I. C. S., Publicity Officer of Madras, to inquire if I would be an honorary correspondent of the Publicity Board. On a reference to the Diwan for guidance, he replied, on 2-9-1919, "By all means accept Mr. Gwynn's offer. The duties are not at all onerous and you are obviously the man for it. You can assure Mrs. Krishna Menon in all sincerity that it will be an agreeable relaxation after melochariths, tenures, contracts and things of that sort."

To trace the origin of the Trichur riots is to rake up old quarrels. That I wish to avoid. But I thought then, and so think even now, that, in his anxiety to put them down at once, the Diwan did the wrong thing. Instead of issuing a peremptory order to Mr. M. A. Chacko, the Chief of the Police Force, and to Mr. C. V. Antony, the District Magistrate, who were

at Trichur then, that they would be held responsible if any disturbance to public safety occurred, he responded to the call of two or three gentlemen and went to the spot himself. I was with him when the emissaries came, and did advise him not to go with them. That the incident, though not in the aggravated form it actually took place, was, more or less, a prearranged plot was the conclusion arrived at even by dispassionate critics. I had reasons to suspect it was so: for, that evening, on which the riots took place, when I came back to Ernakulam, certain gentlemen were waiting at the railway station to get in touch with the happenings at Trichur. That gave me a shock which I shall not forget. It was publicly given out by one section of the people that these riots were intended by certain prominent units of another community so as to form an open affront against the Hindus. Whatever their underlying motive might have been, they, no doubt, embittered for a time the cordial feelings that existed between the two communities.

There was a meeting in the Thekkumladu Maidan to sympathise with those interned at Calicut for non-co-operation. The Police Superintendent did not prevent the meeting, nor the throwing of stones by persons who opposed the object of the meeting. Next, as a counter-move to this meeting, there was what was then given out to be a "loyalty procession", during the course of which certain houses were burnt, shops damaged and persons injured. On 31-1-1921, there was a conference at the Diwan's residence at Trichur to effect a compromise between the communities and to prevent the further spread of the evil effects of the procession by which, it was brought to the notice of the Diwan, only the Hindus were mainly adversely affected. Yet that evening, there was a recurrence of the riots on a more irritating scale than the previous one. Panic ensued and several

respectable Hindus had to leave Trichur on account of fear.

I was asked to go to Trichur at once by Mr. V. K. Kochunnai Menon.

Trichur
22-7-1936.

Dear Krishna Menon,

There was no further disturbance since we met at Ernakulam. As however certain important matters have to be settled for our future guidance, it is desirable that some of you should be here to-morrow, afternoon when the matter will be considered

Yours sincerely,

Sd. V. K. Kochunnai Menon

Of course, I went. At the meeting it was resolved to request the Government to hold a public enquiry into the cause and the course of the riots, the damage caused by this most unwelcome occurrence, and to mete out exemplary punishment to those who were found guilty. I alone raised a note of dissent. I said that the contemplated enquiry with the necessary accompaniment of the examination of witnesses on either side in public, would only worsen the situation and enhance the irritation by a process of crimination and recrimination. On the other hand, if it were a confidential departmental enquiry, to be conducted either by the Diwan or by one of the Chief Court Judges, we could get at the same result speedily without the irritating encumbrances of an open enquiry. I added I would bow to the decision of the majority and do what was required of me to implement that decision. Soon after, I had again to go to Trichur on a call from Mr. Vijayaraghava Chari.

Trichur,
8-8-36,
11.30 P. M.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon:

Your letter was delivered at 5-30 p. m. today, too late to wire to you to start today. Kindly take the 5 p. m. train to-morrow. My car will wait for you at the Trichur Station

Yours sincerely,

Sd. T. Vijayaraghava Chari

Without any reserve, I discussed with him the situation as a whole, gave my unbiased views about it and came away by the next train. His Highness, when next I paid my respects to him, remarked that I stood alone in my position which, he said, would, in the long, 'be the safer and the speedier procedure that the one demanded by the Trichur Public.'

On 3-4-1921, when a few of us were invited to the Hill Palace for a feast in honour of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, he criticised the attitude of Mr. V. K. Sankaran Menon and of my nephew and his son-in-law Dr. T. Krishna Menon, over the Trichur Riots, and remarked that my view was perfectly sane. The same day I was glad to hear from there what His Highness said of me in connection with this question: "Cool heads like that of Krishna Menon are wanted in heated days." However, on a representation from the public and to appease its justifiable anger, Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, Judge, and Mr. H. M. Brown, Excise Commissioner, were appointed Commissioners to enquire into the Trichur Riots. The enquiry was not completed. It came to an untimely end. For, it seems that on the basis of a statement that it need not be proceeded with from three of the signatories of the largely-signed memorial which started the enquiry, it was stopped by Mr. Narayana Menon, the next Diwan! The enquiry was not started on the application of these three from Brnakulam. Strangely enough, the signatories from Trichur were by these three not consulted in this matter. Even

Mr. Doraswamy Iyer who was in Ernakulam, was not taken into confidence by these three! Mr. Doraswamy Iyer spoke to me strongly against the conduct of these three and of the abrupt closure by the Diwan who, he suspected, was behind the statement.

I always found Diwan Sir Vijayaraghava Chari generous to allow me to criticise any act or measure of his and always willing to receive suggestions on matters affecting the State.

The time that he fixed for me to usually see him was 9 p. m., an inconvenient hour no doubt. But I never grudged to sacrifice my sleep for the sake of my country. No doubt, he added in one letter, this rider too: "Call any time you like, you are welcome. Please dispense with the formality of writing beforehand." It, for any reason, I showed any remissness in my regular visits, I would be pulled up by such reminders as this one: "You have given up seeing me. Please call tonight at 7 p. m. if convenient. I won't keep you long." He was so kind to me that I was ever prepared to meet any trouble for him.

18-10-1919. Saw Diwan at night. Cochin Harbour Hydro-electric scheme. Paper Pulp industry — these formed the main subjects of our talk. He said he would consult the public before he came to definite conclusions on these matters. Sovereignty of tracts taken for harbour purposes is to rest with Cochin, which must of course retain the civil and criminal jurisdiction over the area. He fully agreed with this suggestion of mine. Money is to be raised by a Port Trust. About the Malayalam Improvement Committee too he put me several questions. When parting, he excused himself for keeping me to a late hour, and, then, said, "If any person asks you about our talk, tell him that that unsympathetic foreigner refused to be drawn out."

I never allowed any important matter to go by

default for want of representation. If, for any reason, I could not find time to have a personal talk, I would write to him.

Ernakulam,
27-10-'21.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

The information given to you is not correct. Of course I shall let you know when I do hear anything authentic.

I can come to the library any evening except today. Please fix your own day. The other contents of your letter are noted, and are receiving attention, as the shop-keepers say.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. L. Vijayaraghava Chari.

The visit to the library was arranged with a view to induce the Government to give it a better habitation and to get its grant increased. The other contents had reference to the Scout Movement, Household Arts and Cottage Industries, Hydro Electric and Paper Pulp schemes, and the widening of the work of the Sanskrit Pathasala in Trippunithura.

There was a Students' strike in those days, both in Ernakulam and in Trichur. "1st December 1921. Many thanks for your letter and all the work you did at Trichur. I shall be very grateful indeed if you will be at the college at 9.30 a. m. on Monday to see that the boys behave themselves properly."

Ernakulam,
4-10-1921.

Dear Sir,

Kindly accept my warm thanks for the trouble you took over the students' strike. The result of your intervention has been the speedy and satisfactory settlement of the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. T. Vijayaraghava Chari.

Of this and about those who worked with me I have already written in another place. Also of the fact that I made this an occasion to drive home the benefits that could be derived by introducing the Scout Movement among the students of the State. I went on hammering at the question until it was taken up by the Diwan in right earnest. He was from the beginning with me, but — there I fully sympathised with him — he was so full up with a number of other activities connected with the administration of the State in these difficult days. Malabar Riots, Plague, Famine, scarcity of food-stuffs, all were claiming his anxious attention.

Eruakulam,

11-12-1921.

Dear Mr. Krishnan Menon,

..... If you and Mr. Mathai will come round, I can discuss both questions, viz., the Scouts and the Women's Continuation classes. Fix day any you like before the 31st.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. Vijayaraghava Chari.

13-12-1921, Wife's birthday. Hence, being Karthika, at our expense, there was illumination in the temple. I could not go for it. I was held up by the Diwan from 5 to 8 p. m. to revise with him and Mr. Doraswamy Iyer the Rules and Regulation of the proposed Legislative Council.

15-12-1921. This evening there was a meeting at Mattancherry to collect funds for the refugees who are here from Malabar on account of the riots there. The Diwan presided; the British Resident was kindly present at the meeting. In connection with the same matter and, as a preliminary to the public meeting, there was this morning a conference at the Diwan's, at which Messrs K. A. Parameswara Iyer, K. J. Guna Pai, Doraswami Iyer, Marayi, Appu Menon and myself

were present. We went into the matter of the collection and of the utilisation of the fund minutely. 7-8-1922. As arranged, Mr. Mathai and myself met the Diwan this morning to talk about starting the Scout movement in Cochin. That it should be started, there was no difference of opinion. But Mr. Mathai wanted it to be a purely non-official affair; I, on the other hand, vehemently said that, unless it be started at least on a semi-official basis, the movement would not work well. The Diwan agreed with me. We planned to have Central and Taluk Associations.

A Committee was appointed to go into the second question, while he did a lot of pioneer work on the first one. But the Diwan did not get his due meed of praise for all the trouble he took to see scouting started in the State. As in the case of the Legislative Council, for this also, the next Diwan had the credit for the introduction, though the spadework was done in both by Mr. Vijayaraghava Chari.

I was keen on widening the activities of the Sanskrit Pathasala at Tripunithuram, particularly by the introduction of Architecture, Ayurveda and Astrology into the curriculum of its studies. I approached my friend, Mr. K. Rama Pisharoti, and discussed the subject with him before I formally broached it to the Diwan on 24th June 1923. I even promised that I would yearly give a prize to the student who stood as first in the final examination in Ayurveda. He agreed with my views. I have been giving the prize ever after the subject came to be taught there. The Diwan was always generous to my suggestions and kind to me.

His wife and children also were extremely kind to me and to my wife. His was a happy family. The eldest daughter was a voracious reader, and she had my library at her disposal. When there was a suggestion from her mother that she should cease to

be a student and proceed to the next stage in her life, I had to plead for her to her parents to permit her to continue her studies to which she was much devoted. I believe it was only after she took her M. A. degree that she married. From Udaipur, where her father was then the Diwan, she wrote to me, as the local Secretary of the Women's Education Section of the All-Indian Educational Conference which met there in the closing days of the December of 1940. "I am quite a novice in public work and I shall be grateful for any assistance you may give me as an old friend. Particularly, I desire to have a paper from you on any subject connected with Women's education to be read at the Conference which I trust you will attend. It would be a splendid thing if you could take part in the symposium on the subject: 'Should there be separate curricula for men and women in School and College?' How I wished I could. But Udaipur is far, far away from Ernakulam, and I am not blessed with the necessary funds to cover the distance in any comfortable stages.

I have covered several years for a reference, irresistible do doubt, to this nice letter. But I must go back to take up the thread of my story. Before I go to the next Diwan, I have to record my loyal reverence to the Ruler and my sincere gratitude to the Diwan for the uniform kindness they showed me and the implicit confidence they reposed in me. "Words are weak and most to seek, when greatly they are wanted." But the expression of this kindness and confidence had an unpleasant reaction on me. Two or three jealous persons could not bear to see it or to hear it with peace of mind. So they tried to alienate the sympathy of my patrons from me. But, in their difficulty to discover any scandal against me, they followed a clumsy but mean procedure. They gave out that I had taken to a second wife. The day after the publication of this calumny in

Trichur and Ennakulato, the information was conveyed to the palace at Coonoor where His Highness was then staying and to the Diwan who was at Chowerah. The Diwan at once wrote to me to be enlightened. I replied that, as I happened to be the alleged culprit, I was not the proper person to be approached for light on the matter. He soon after assured me that he had from the best authority the reason for the origin of this undiluted lie, while, from the palace, I had the assurance that such false talks would never influence His Highness and Consort in the least. So the detractors of my reputation were foiled in their attempt. In fact it gave me a better hold in the minds of those from where my adversaries tried to dislodge me. But they remained unrepentant.

I took no notice of my assailants. I never despised them nor thought it necessary to defend myself. You will only rub the dirt into the texture if you deal with wet mud in your cloths; when dry, you can flick it off with a stick. Similarly with these scandals. I had certain advantages over my antagonists. For the honour rooted in dishonour stood. It was unimagined falsehood that they tried to spread against me. My views on the subject I have tried to embody in a few of the provisions of the Nayar Regulation and to boldly express in my Preface to my wife's rendering of the *Poison Tree*. For these and for my character I had, on several times, the privilege to hear my meed of merited praise from decent mankind. My share of joy did not end there. I had the honour to assist some of my assailants to turn a difficult corner. However, I shall not let the matter out now; there is no need to stain them anew.

Another, who was in league with these people and went about to damn me with the same zest, which he worked to prevent some of us getting sannads for the highest court, came to grief, on a later date.

I did nothing to hush up the talk against me;

never intended to do. It died of itself, of its own inherent inanity in the course of a month or two. And, then, one day, Justice P. I. Varugis, a good friend of mine, complimented me on the courage I showed when it was in its full swing. I told him that, if the rumour was true, I deserved the chastisement; if it were false, why should I be cowardly? But I was really sorry for the lady whose name was sought to be linked with the scandal. Mr. Machay Sankara Menon told me that he and Mr. Karakkadi Paramu Menon had been to the house of the lady with whose name mine was linked to enquire into the truth of the matter. They found the rumour absolutely false and the lady religious-minded and decent. From other sources as well, I chanced to hear that she was clean, educated and god-fearing, and refused to be bribed to tarnish reputation. My wife came to know her afterwards, through a common friend, and helped her with books, and once even with money, on a mortgage, with easy terms, to save her homestead from being sold for a family-debt. Ever after I heard of her unblemished character and of her religious bent of mind, I used to respect her. Of her early and untimely death I heard with regret. I shall never cease to honour her memory. For she was a brave, well-mannered Nayar lady of the old type.

My wife got two letters from her. With the leave from my wife, I shall quote a few sentences from one, and the other in full.

மாநில

എന്നിങ്ങനെയൊരു രംഗപ്പരീക്ഷയും വെളിച്ചം നേറ്റതാണെന്നാണ്. നിങ്ങളുടെ ബുക്കുകളും മിഖലകളും ഞാൻ വായിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. നിങ്ങൾ ഓരോ ഊരാകത്തെയും ചൊല്ലുന്നതും ഞാൻ കേൾക്കാറുണ്ട്. കല്യാണി അമ്മയായിട്ടു വരികപോകാകൊണ്ട്, വല്ല പുസ്തകങ്ങളും വായിക്കാമിരിക്കണം എന്നു കേൾക്കുമ്പോഴൊക്കെയോ ഇങ്ങനെയൊരു പ്രസ്താവം നിങ്ങളുടെ അസൂയയോടെ പറഞ്ഞുണ്ടാകുമായിട്ടുണ്ട്. പിന്നെ എന്റെ മോഹം എല്ലാം നിന്നു.

Mr. Kuppalaadt Govinda Menon during this period. Among my friends, no one moved longer and more closely with my wife and myself than him. He must have known that I would be the last to stain my character and to wound the feelings of my wife by an act like that. And even if I had gone wrong, he should have been the first to stand by me and to put me right. He kept away from me; worse, he tried to spread the rumour in Chittur and in other places. I never reproved him: not one word of reproach escaped from me about him. But the hand of the retributive justice did not linger long. In the April of 1921, one near and dear to him caught him in a very nasty trap. Mr. Govinda Menon was innocent; but still the consequences of the young man's act would naturally have been most disastrous to Mr. Govinda Menon. He informed me all about the incident. I advised him what he should immediately do, which, without any hesitation, he did. He had to write to me as "My dear old brother", and to request me to save him from the dire results. I took pity on him. I did not go to the Diwan direct, as he wanted me to do. I went to Irinjalakuday instead and consulted Mr. Paruvakkadt Narayana Menon who was there then on leave. He kindly heard me fully and at once came with me to Ernakulam to put matters right for Mr. Govinda Menon. Thus the honour of Mr. Govinda Menon was saved.

Again, I had the supreme satisfaction of being near and helpful to him when he closed his life. When, as usual, my wife and myself went to Ooty after the Vishu in the April of 1927, we found Mr. Govinda Menon in our Hotel. He looked a bit pulled down, dark in his face and weak. He was alone. After we joined him, evidently there was a marked improvement. He cheered himself up and daily came with us during our morning and evening walks. A part of his noon too he spent in our room. On the 21st

April, he did not come to start for the walk; so we went to his room, when he complained of a slight pain in the lower jaw and of a disturbed sleep. He refused to have the services of any medical man. "What? For this?" he taunted me. Anyhow, we fomented the aching jaw, gave him a refreshing drink, cracked some jokes and left him to have "a sound sleep and sweet dreams." On our return, we found him in a nice sound sleep. At the time of our lunch, my wife wanted me to wake him up. On going to his room, he was resting so well that I told my wife that it would be a sin to disturb him, and remarked that sleep was a great restorer of health. About 2-30 p. m. we thought we must rouse him up so as to have his meals. What was my dismay when there was no response even to a shake of mine! With the rug tucked up under his chin, he remained in the same way we left him in the morning. He was warm all over. But I could not feel the beat of his pulse. So at once, I phoned to Mr. A. N. Menon, a friend of mine, to fetch a doctor forthwith. He came with a doctor, who pronounced that life must have been extinct about an hour ago at the most. Mr. Rekunni Nair, the Deputy Collector, was well known to me. He said that I need have no worry over the incident. With the help of Messrs. Rekunni Nair and A. N. Menon, I arranged everything for a cremation there, or for a transport to Trichur. In reply to a telegraphic message of mine, I got a reply by phone to intimate that a party has started to take the body home. Somehow, led by Mr. P. Chandrasekhara Menon, they came only the next morning. But, they had only to wait for their tea. About this loss, two letters I have preserved, one from his son Mr. P. Narayana Menon, and the other from mine own. "Providence has willed that our father should quit the world away from those nearest and dearest to him, but we have a melancholy happiness that his oldest and closest

friend was with him. I shall not attempt the impertinence of thanking you for what you have been or have done to our father." Sankaran's letter is to this effect: "Kuppakudi Govinda Menon is an extremely happy man. I am sure his departure in so casual, sudden a manner must have shaken you up a bit. All who had assembled at Govinda Menon's place were remarking what a happy and fortunate coincidence it was that his life-long and best friends were with him in the hour of death Having received the news from Chandrasekara Menon, Chakrapani Marar and Aniyar, all were remarking appreciatingly of how all arrangements had been made and the transport of the body facilitated by your attention to the necessary formalities."

Now let me take you back to the other two Diwans.

Of the next two Diwans, Mr. P. Narayana Menon and Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, I have but little to say. In certain respects, in many I should say, one was the antithesis of the other. The one had two or three confidential advisors, while the other never resorted to such covered retreats for consultation. The one was a good penman, but disposed to be eccentric; the other never prided himself to be a great writer, but he was methodical and possessed no oddness of conduct. The one was many-sided in his attainments and acutely shrewd in his instinctive powers; but when the chilly wind of disfavour began to blow athwart his path, he threw caution to the winds, and, in what he called his puritan pride, he transgressed the tradition of the elders. But, as for Mr. Narayana Iyer, he had no hint of any extraordinary gifts. His conspicuous gift was negative. It was his silence. Events always played the trump card for him. His luck was a legend, and he was loyal to the last breath of his life.

As these two were local men and also because

they resented, so I was told by knowing persons, being advised, I rarely went to them, unless I was asked by them to see them. But both treated me as a friend and gave me full liberty to discuss with them every sort of subject of public interest; and, on all matters in which they required my help, I gave it willingly and without reserve.

It was, I believe, soon after Mr. Narayana Menon became the Diwan that Dr. Rabindranath Tagore visited this State. Tagore was treated as a State guest in Travancore, and he came here from there, accompanied by Desabandhu C. P. Andrews, and Mr. G. V. Subramanya Iyer, as the Travancore Agent. Mr. Parakkal Krishna Menon approached the Diwan — I refused to go with him to see the Diwan — to know if the distinguished poet would be welcomed as a State guest here as well. Not getting any decided reply from the Diwan, Mr. Krishna Menon and myself managed to form a small Reception Committee to accord a welcome to Tagore. In drafting the address, I took care to compose it with phrases and sentences culled from *Gitanjali* and a few other poems of Tagore. On 17-11-1922, the Poet came; that evening the address was presented to him from the College Hall, when he also delivered an eloquent illuminating lecture on *the Message of the Forest* which charmed the audience. Next day, Mr. Krishna Menon and myself visited the Poet at Tatapuram where he was staying with a Bengali friend of his. Instead of on chairs, we preferred to sit at his feet. "Last night, you flung my own words at my face!" That was the first thing he said with a smile. "Rather, we offered worship at your feet with flowers from your garden," I answered. He laughed. Then he grew serious and said with a touch of sadness, "I expected to meet angels with Veena in Kerala. No doubt, a few fair damsels I chanced to come across. But, what of the

Veena?" We too had to reply with regret that harmonium had transplanted veena, that modern education was manufacturing a set of anaemic ladies, and Sanskrit was being dislodged from its once proud place in our households. He was very, very sorry to hear it. After a short talk, we withdrew as others were waiting to see him, and also because Mr. G. V. Subramanya Iyer and Mr. C. F. Andrews were, I got word, expecting my return in my place. Mr. Andrews told me that he knew something of me from our friend G. V., and that he was immensely pleased with the grand reception the Gurudev had in the College Hall the previous evening. He took tea and, after a talk on various subjects, he requested me to become a *sadasya* of the Santiniketan Institution, which I readily did at once, and paid my contribution for it. "We are friends from this day," he said on talking leave of me. "A blessing it is to me." I said and we parted. We met again only on 3-1-1925 when he came and stayed with Judge Mr. P. I. Vargis. That evening he delivered a lecture on *Tagore and Gandhi* in the College Hall. Soon after that, he came straight to me from the platform and, with a warm shake, said "I wanted to come to you after this business." There was beautiful moonlight. We walked arm in arm to my place; took tea; had a long talk in which wife and son also joined us. "Instead of being on the waiting list for a post, come, my boy, to Santiniketan and work there. That will drive away all dejection," he advised my son. We thanked him for the offer. Next I got this card, sent from Cuttack on 1-10-1927, "Thank you so much for your very kind letter of greeting on my return home. Give my kindest remembrances to your family.

Your affectionate
Sd. C. F. Andrews."

The last time we met was from our friend Rao Bahadur Natesa Iyer's place at Ootacamund. My

wife and myself saw him more than once. He then complained to us of weakness and indifferent health. He then gave me for perusal a typed copy of his book on *Truth about India* which he was getting ready for the press. He asked me about Cochin and Travancore affairs, and particularly about the reaction in orthodox circles of the Temple Entry Proclamation. He was a great man, and I cherish the memory of his friendship.

To the Diwans let me again go.

Ernakulam,

19th June 1923.

My dear Aniyam,

I have just received a telegram from the Travancore Diwan saying that the University Committee arrives at Ernakulam on the night of the 22nd instant I should like to consult you on the matter. Can you please therefore look me up when you go to court today or before 3 p. m. or after 7 p. m.

Yours affectionately,

Sd. P. Narayana Menon.

Ernakulam,

18-9-'97.

"You have not caught me napping about the postage rates. I took action on it long ago If you want I shall show you the papers on their return from His Highness"

"2-12-1923. Please see copy enclosed of a communication we have received from the Surgeon-General to the Viceroy, and let me know whether you have any suggestions to make. Perhaps it will be better to form a committee consisting of yourself and certain others to consider the ways and means."

On matters connected with literature, education, the inauguration of the Legislative Council, and the raising of the Sircar College into a First Grade Institution, he always consulted me; and he treated with respect my opinions on other subjects when about

which I happened to write to him. So too Mr. Narayyer.

Chief Court,
Ernakulam,
19-5-98.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

I thank you sincerely for your kind letter of to-day and the sentiments so nicely expressed therein. It has given me immense pleasure to find that my friends, amongst whom I regard you as one, attached to me from my student's days, rejoice in the honour conferred on me.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely,

Sd. T. S. Narayana Iyer.

Camp Trichur.

26th August 1927.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

I read your interesting letter dated 8-1-03 with great profit. I would like to inform you that the matters referred to therein will receive my earnest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. T. S. Narayana Iyer.

The matters referred to were the procedure to be adopted in connection with a censure motion in the Council, the desirability to contribute a decent sum to the Flood Relief Funds started in Baroda and Maharashtra, and the need to re-constitute the Economic Development Board, widening its powers so as to include Rural Reconstruction, development of Village Panchayats etc.

The last Diwan to be connected with the Maharaja whose demise took place at Madras was Mr. ~~Erskine~~ 9911 and Sir Shanmukham Chetty will

fit in more with the period of the regime of the next Ruler, a saintly man popularly known as the Dharmika-Chakravarthi. Before I pass on to that term of the time, I wish to put in one word to correct a wrong idea of the penultimate Maharaja. It was said of him that he was in the worst state of health and unconscious besides, even before he went to Madras for expert medical help. When certain interested parties were guardedly circulating this rumour in this State, I had reasons to see His Highness whom I then found to be keenly alive to the affairs of the country, and who, on one or two occasions, even adversely criticised the answers given by the Government to the supplementary questions asked in the Council.

The next Ruler was, as I have already remarked, a quiet man with very simple habits, who laid no pretensions to any profound scholarship or statecraft. He had implicit faith in Trippoonthura Appan, the family Doctor, who he fully believed would guide him aright in all matters, public and private. The fundamentals he grasped and held fast to them with tenacity. I had a personal experience of this inimitable quality of His Highness. More than a month before His Highness started on his Delhi trip, I went and paid my respects to him. I prostrated before him, as he was also to visit Benares and have *gangasargams* there. Then His Highness said, "പ്രഭു ആദ്യകാൽ ഇക്കാരെ ക്ഷമാര കഴിക്കട്ടെ. എനിക്ക് ഇതു കഴിയുമോ?" കെ ചങ്ങ: കഴിഞ്ഞു ഞാൻ ചന്ദ്രപ്പനമ്മ."

(Persons of the old type cannot do without these formalities. Why did you come so early? I start only a month hence.)

I replied that then he might not, in the rush, find time for any leisured talk, and further, I said, with some deep concern, "അതൊന്നാകട്ടെ വെറും ഉണർത്തിയൊന്നു നല്ല." "അതൊന്നാ?" ചക്കന്നമ്മയുടെയും ചെമ്മരിയുടെയും അമ്മയുടെയും മകൾ. അവൾ മരിക്കുക നല്ലതാണ്. അവൾ മരിക്കുക നല്ലതാണ്.

കൊ. പിന്നെ ഇദ്ദേഹം വിദ്യകലാഭരണാലയത്തിൽ വന്നു. അദ്ദേഹം പറഞ്ഞു: "I have a sad subject to be brought to the notice of Your Highness."

(I have a sad subject to be brought to the notice of Your Highness.)

I hear, Your Highness by invitation will be going to Delhi also. Then there will be a grand reception and all that. There might be a request for the surrender of the Cochin Harbour. If that is done, our State also may go.)

On hearing this, he got down from the rocking cot where he was seated, and came near me and said with emphasis, "എന്നു പറയുകയും ചെയ്തപ്പോൾ ഞങ്ങൾക്കും ഭയം ഉണ്ടാകും. അതുകൊണ്ട് ഞങ്ങൾക്ക് അത്ഭുതകരമായ ഒരു വാഗ്ദാനം ഉണ്ടാകണം. അത്ഭുതകരമായ ഒരു വാഗ്ദാനം ഉണ്ടാകണം."

(Do not fear that. Kunhukrishnan need never fear that. I will not surrender. In fact, The Resident is coming here this afternoon. I shall speak to him even today on the subject.)

There was a stage set for this movement, for this surrender by the State of its jurisdiction over the Port area to the British Government. Mr. R. C. Bristow, the Harbour Engineer-in-Chief, was one of those who believed that, for the development of the Harbour, this surrender was essential. I could not for the life of me subscribe to this argument, which I thought was prejudicial to the welfare and glory of Cochin. That was why I made myself bold to submit the matter to His Highness before it would be too late to do so. The educated patriotic public of Cochin was solidly behind me in my position. But I do not deny there were a few who thought otherwise and was prepared to follow the lead of Mr. Bristow. Even one's fingers were, however, one too many to count their number. Mr. M. S. Menon, M. A., Barrister-at-Law, was one who championed the side for surrender. That fact, when it dawned on me, gave me a shock of unpleasant surprise. These extracts from the narration.

THE DAYS THAT WERE

11-7-1933. M. S. Menon came to me and asked me to prepare a paper on *Cochin and Federation*. I felt relieved by his request, as his paper would release me from my labours on a similar venture. Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, M. A., B. L., the Special Harbour Officer, was also here. We three put our heads together and sketched the several headings for the paper. Gave Menon such books and printed papers that I had with me.

16-7-1933. M. S. Menon read the draft of his paper to me. I suggested some changes. He said he would send it to me again for a careful revision.

18-7-1933. Engaged in revising the lecture of M. S. Menon. Added a few pages on matters connected with Federation and the Harbour. Mr. Narayana Iyer also helped the paper by adding two or three pages to it.

28-7-1933. Returned the paper after revision. Mr. Narayana Iyer and myself are inclined to think, from the way he abruptly veers towards its close to put in a plea for the surrender of jurisdiction, that M. S. Menon has written the paper with a purpose. So I wrote to him. Professor P. Sankaran Nambiyar also holds the same view. It seems he even told M. S. Menon, an old student of his, to change that part as it looked out of place.

2-8-1933. I suggested to Mr. Parakkal Krishna Menon the need for the Legislative Council to strengthen the position of His Highness with regard to the Harbour affair. He said he would consult a few other members of the Council also and let me know their views over my proposal.

3-8-1933. Saw Messrs. A. S. Pojuval and P. Rama Menon, Council Members, in connection with a "Harbour Memorial" to His Highness. Mr. Rama Menon wants me to prepare

4-2-1933. Had a talk with Dr. A. R. Menon over the "memorial." He fully coincided with my views. He also requested me to draft the memorial myself.

8-8-1933. Handed over the typed copy of the memorial to Dr. A. R. Menon. He promised to get it signed by the non-official members of the Council.

11-8-1933. Went to Trippy; handed over the signed memorial to Sarvadhikariakur. On taking leave, I told him to see that jurisdiction was never given up. He cheered me by stating, "Would never be done — over even an inch of ground."

When, on the night of the 6th of August, Mr. M. S. Menon wrote to me, on his return from the Willingdon Island, "I wish to retain my remarks regarding jurisdiction. But I shall make them as watery as possible." That was not a proper approach to a grave question, I thought. So, I set about writing a paper myself on *Cochin and Federation*. I read it, on 14-10-1933, as a University Extension Lecture, before a meeting in the St. Thomas College at Trichur. It was presided over by His Grace Dr. Vaythapilli, the late revered Bishop of Trichur.

Soon after the delivery of this lecture, there was a leader in English in the *Mahatma*, a Malayalam weekly, published from Trichur. It compared the two performances to the detriment of Mr. M. S. Menon's paper. There was a dignified article; there was journalism about it. Mr. M. S. Menon on his part thought, so I thought, it was neither; for, neither did he know of the authorship. Anyhow, a reference went through the lecture himself. It is a very correct statement of but in a clear and forcible manner. The

pleasure. It is an able and useful exposition of the case for Cochin in regard to the harbour and maritime customs and sets forth your objections to the entry of Cochin into the Federation. The federation of the Indian States with British India is an exceedingly intricate question. I have never been enamoured of a federation, and we have to assent to it simply because that is the only condition on which the British Government is prepared to grant the shadow of responsibility in the Central Government.

Yours Sincerely,

Sd. P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer.

In his reply to my letter of congratulations and good wishes on his appointment as a Judge of the Madras High Court, Sir C. V. Anantakrishna Iyer kindly referred to my paper, even though I had not then directly sent him a copy of it, in these words: "I had occasion to go through the lecture delivered by you, and found the same very interesting, instructive and useful."

Bishop's House,

Trichur, 2-11-1935.

Dear Krishna Menon,

I thank you very much for a copy of your lecture on the Federation of India. I have so kindly set to work. It is very interesting and instructive reading for which Cochin should be grateful to you.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. F. Vazhapilly,

Bishop of Trichur.

Trichur,

9-4-'09.

My dear Friend,

I have just went through the lecture twice. It is a very correct statement of the facts and a plausible and forcible manner. The

Diwan will derive benefit by perusing it, and can also learn from it the opinion of Cochin patriots about the Harbour question. I dare say you have sent copies of it to His Highness and the Diwan

Yours affectionately,
Sd. P. Damodara Menon.

13, Ferozshah Road,
New Delhi, 1-11-1933.

My dear Mr. Kunhikrishna Menon:

Thank you very much for your letter of the 19th instant and also for the 2 books you sent me, regarding Cochin and Federation. Mr. Herbert who has finished reading it spoke to me in high terms of your book and also of yourself. I am very glad to know that he has such a good opinion of you. I told him also that you were my late wife's uncle

It was most kind of you to have made offerings and prayers in the different temples and I appreciate very much your affectionate thought. I am sending you separately a group photo taken on the day of the *Shasthi* part. It is a family group containing the photos of my children. Another photo was also taken of the guests in the Maharajas of Cochin. Being papers

I shall study the paper you sent me in 2 or 3 days. The other copy you have presented to His Excellency the Viceroy. I shall meet him during the course of this week. I shall also mention to him our relationship

I am,
Yours very sincerely,
Sd. Vasudeva Raja

The Diwan C. G. Herbert, long before the date of the above letter of Raja Sri Vasudeva Raja, had

known my views on the subject of my lecture from an article of mine, and written to me on the subject. Of course I sent him a copy of the lecture too after it was delivered.

Ernakulam,
6th April 1933.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon.

Many thanks for your letter and the copy of the newspaper.

I liked your witty remark about the bachelors: it was a pleasant interlude in the midst of work.

I had been hoping that you and Mrs. Krishna Menon would take tea with me one afternoon; but had no spare time at all after I returned from Delhi. Tomorrow I leave for Springfield. Is there any chance of your going to Gody this year?

I read your article "Cochin and Federation" with much interest. There is only one small criticism that I would make. You say that Cochin could not have financed from its own resources the construction and development of the port. But from half the customs revenue it could certainly have financed half the development and the Madras Government would have financed the other half. However that is past history.

With kind regards-

Yours sincerely,
Sd. C. G. Herbert.

I was very glad to get this letter from the Diwan. For, there was a talk here at one time that it was the paucity of our finances that forced the State to consent the sister State to be a partner of the concern. His Highness was against it, and it was so it was broadly hinted, only on the persuasion of Lord Willington that he half-heartedly allowed that course. When His Excellency the Governor visited the State, a grand Garden Party was arranged in his honour on

5-3-1996 (21-10-1920). But that day happened to be the Mahanavami in the Navaratri celebrations; as soon as I got the invitation, I drew the attention of the Diwan Sri Vijayaraghava Chari to this fact. He said no one till then hinted that to him, and it was too late to change the date. My wife and myself went to Chittur to fulfill a long standing engagement at the Gurumadham at Chittur. There, in a small place, worship was done to the Methiyadi (wooden sandals) of the great Thunjath Ramannujan Ezhuthassan, the father of modern Malayalam literature, to whose great memory I make my humble obeisance. I was able to induce Diwan Vijayaraghava Chari to give Rs. 2000 towards the construction of a new building to house the sandals and also a library. I have helped to develop it in other ways as well. It was on my return from Chittur that I heard of the fire in the Trippunithurath temple on the Mahanavami night. A glorious structure has arisen from the ashes of the old building.

Mr. Herbert in Cochin proved himself to be a very good man and a very conscientious officer. We met for the first time when he came to visit the Legislative Council Hall. Before I proceed further, let me give four extracts from my diary which will indicate in a conspicuous manner the points of contact between us and how we parted.

1930-10-10 Today the Diwan visited the Council Hall. I received him and took him over the whole place and explained briefly the nature of the Council and of the Council Office. Then we came to my room and sat there and talked for a pretty long time. He expressed pleasure at the neatness in which everything is kept in the hall, office, and library. He said he was reading the life of Diwa Sankunni Menon from the Jubilee Number of the *C N Age Magazine*. He was glad to be told that it was written by me. Gave him a copy of it, as also of one of the

septennial report of the Scout Movement. "I like the movement. It is capable of immense possibilities for good", he remarked. He disliked the idea of presiding over the Council. "It is anomalous that the Diwan should preside over the Council. I am no good speaker and can't speak much." To which I replied, "We follow other Indian States in that procedure. As for speaking, the Council would welcome even your silence, for its complaint with the prior appointment was that he monopolised all the talk." He prepared and went away.

He was 5-10-1932. Had a long talk with the Diwan. He spoke to me all about the Simla Conference. Asked me if he should attend the Round Table Conference, in London. "Certainly," I said "Why should another, who has no stake in the State, represent us? There is no use of mourning after the event." He agreed with me.

16-8-1934. Visited the Diwan. (Scout Association, Research Institute, Board of Studies and Text-Book Committee, the need for a Dental Surgeon in a General Hospital, Harbour, Leper Asylum, currents and cross-currents that are at work - these formed the topics of talk. I never minced matters; I told him bluntly that the trio whom he patronised had not, at any rate, worked in his favour. He winced at my remark, but admitted that there was some truth in it.

7-4-1935. Went to the Railway Station to bid farewell to Mr. Herbert. There was a distant private hint from him that he did not expect me there, because he was not in the good graces of some palace people. "That means, you are yet to know me, Sir." Then he pressed my hand and said, "Glad you came to bid me goodbye. I shall write to you from Madras. Please go, you need not wait in the sun." I came away.

The way he conformed himself to the two Rulers

under whom he served showed the acme of perfection of his gentlemanly behaviour. Though he had to work all along under a cloud, because, in the first instance, he wanted, for proper reasons, to effect a change of department to a high-placed officer, and, in the next place, he refused, and rightly too, to recommend the appointment of an individual to a high place. But these set-backs he did not care at all; he gave of his best to Cochin.

When I went to Baroda, almost the first that sagacious statesman, Sir Krishnamachari, was about Mr. Herbert. "Cochin has treated Herbert badly. I chanced to see his work in *Lodges*. I was surprised to see a European I. C. S. working so intensely in the interests of an Indian State." "Please do not say Cochin," I replied. "You might say 3 or 4, not even half a dozen. Cochin² gratefully appreciates his work." From Sir Soper¹ also I have heard of his work in London. "Mr. Herbert met me several times in London, and he said I want to the India Office to explain the Cochin case as the Viceroy wired to the Indian Office that they must hear me. I found Mr. Herbert as always extremely useful. . . . I have done all that I reasonably could so far and you may be sure that I shall consider it my duty at the later stages to do all that I can do to secure the interest of Cochin. . . ." On the suggestion of Mr. Kacha Govinda Marar and of myself, His Highness was pleased to have a cable sent to Mr. Herbert that he should consult Sir Albion Banerji also in the preparation and presentation of our case.

I was permitted to move in close touch with him. He is a great and sincere man. He thought of his work and the cause. A pedestrian would no doubt he trod; there was no romance about him.

"Our memorandum for the Committee" he once wrote to me "has been finished and despatched. I

enjoyed preparing it, though the enjoyment was somewhat marred by the haste in which it has to be done. The memorandum deals with the first two points raised in your letter." He invariably sent me copies of his memorandums. They were terse, but luminous and pregnant with meaning. His style had the charm of economy and his workmanship showed the dignity of concentration.

Only on one major issue we disagreed: the Anappara scheme. But there I do not wholly blame him. He was side-tracked by interested parties. These must be penitents today, that is, if they have a fund of genuine patriotism about them. In a long letter on the subject, dated 30-12-1930, from Coimoor, he wrote to me: "I have been giving careful consideration to our conversation regarding the future of the Maharaja's College and to your letter on the subject. I have come to the conclusion that no useful purpose would be served in revising the terms of reference to the Committee so as to include a consideration of the respective merits of Ernakulam and Namavarma-puram as the future site of the College I am however adding to the terms of reference to the Committee the possibility and desirability of opening a Technological Institute in the State." After this, I never troubled him on the subject. I left the matter there. I did not think it worth the while to approach His Highness too.

His Highness was always very kind to me. He gave me a copy of his diary which he kept of the north-Indian tour. I believe only 25 copies of it were printed. He also sent me a set of songs and hymns which he had scrupulously copied from his mother's collection and got printed in the Government Press. My grand-nephew, Madhavan, the Malayalam Translator to the Government, one who

has also inherited the literary talents of his father, was in charge of their editing. His Highness devoted two hours every day to transcribe manuscripts and to prepare them for publication. For clean caligraphy any modern student can take a lesson from these books. Writing shows the man; that is a suggestive saying. Here unmistakably it does. The unsullied life of a great religious recluse is clearly portrayed in these manuscripts.

Every educated South Indian knows that His Highness was also a lover and patron of arts and letters. He was a critical judge in art, music and dance. He knew the technique of the indigenous drama, drums and dance, and could give tips to the experts in the line.

The following extracts from my diary will show that I was fortunate to move closely with His Highness:

1933-10-19. Hill Palace. His Highness advised me never to discontinue my daily worship. "പ്രഭാതം സോമനാമകം ച. ൧൦. ൧൦ വൃത്താർക്ക നമ്മാളുടേതാകട്ടെ എന്ന്. എല്ലാ മരിക്കു വരുന്നതും ആർക്കും പറ്റിക്കൂട്ടം."

(To persons of the old type, all this can be told. The young men think slightly of us. No one knows when one is to die and all that.)

Then he asked me if I did not hear of a party coming from the north to force temple-entry here. He said he saw it in a Malayalam paper. "എക്കാരെ കാലകൂടാ അങ്ങ് വന്നുവേണ്ടെന്നാണ് — പറ്റിപ്പി. ഭൂമി, സമ്പത്തും, നല്ല ഊരും ദേവിയുമാണ് കൂടെയിരിക്കേണം. വെച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്. പക്ഷെ." (All these must come in gradually. Education, cleanliness, culture, good faith in God — all these they must have. It will not be fruitful if they are forcibly taken in. Should not.) Again, he

touched the question; “അയാൾ സമ്മതിക്കില്ല. ഉദാഹരണത്തിന്, തന്ത്രികൾ, വാക്കുകൾക്കുവേണ്ടിയുള്ളവർ, ഇവർക്കൊക്കെ സമ്മതിക്കുമോ?” His Highness spoke with warmth and feeling. (Uralers, Tanthrics, other members of the Raja's family — should not all these also consent?)

1936-11-25. Visited His Highness. His Highness said that he disliked to see many visitors, especially those who went to him with ulterior objects. He named a few in which two or three of his anandavans were also included. His Highness said that he liked to see me, a very old acquaintance and well known. He spoke of temple entry, he is dead against it. He gave me an idea of his daily routine, and asked for mine. He particularly advised me not to go in for violent exercises. Wife and myself saw His Highness' consort and her daughter. Mr. T.K. Sankara Menon, Sarvadhikariakar, told me that, as a rule, His Highness refuses to see visitors and was surprised at the long talk with me. It seems a certain gentlemen had already written thrice for an interview.

1937-6-25. With wife went to see the Laper Hospital at Puthenkurush on the invitation of Miss Matiskainen, an old intimate friend of us in the Salvation Army. The institution is situated in an ideal locality. She took us round it. Had tea with her. We gave a small donation to enable her to give refreshments to the inmates. On our return, I paid my respects to His Highness, and wife went to the Consort's quarters where I afterwards joined her. His Highness was speaking to me about the value of folklore and certain peculiarities of our drumming, dance and gestures as he put it. On taking leave, His Highness graciously said, “സൗകന്ത്യമ്മേ പൂജാർച്ചയ്ക്കു വരുന്നതിൽ സമ്മതമെന്നു മനോഹരം. ഇവിടെ നിറക്കാരത്തിൽ, പൊക്കോട്ട, മറ്റാറിയരിക്കാരനാണല്ലോ”

നമ്മൾ പഴയ ആളുകളായി, അങ്ങനത്തവരായി വെടിപറമ്പ
ഇല്ലാത്ത. (Come when you have leisure. Need not
consult my time. You may return if there is
pressure of work here. There is no reason for
misunderstanding. We are of the old type. I like to
talk with such people.

The only other name that comes in line with the contents of this chapter is that of Sir Shanmukham Chetty. He treated me with consideration; but, somehow, I thought, his confidence and his friendship he did not give me in proper measure. Further, with some of his major acts and appointments, I could only express surprise and my difference. But these did not diminish my admiration for his wide knowledge and administrative capacity and his firm tact in handling and taming recalcitrant parties; and I always was willing and ready to perform what he wanted me to do.

Raja Vasudeva Raja and Sir Shanmukham Chetty were friends, and the Raja had a hand in the selection of the latter as the Diwan of the State. The Raja once told me that a certain retired officer was praising two of his friends to the Diwan and trying to decoy me to him, and that, because of the Raja, the pensioner could not carry out his nefarious purpose. But I did not leave the matter there. With the leave of the Raja, I wrote, out of mere sport, to the Diwan on the subject, and kindly warned him of the presence in the State of such busy bodies as that officer. I never mentioned the source of my information. He kindly replied me at once:

Elkhill House,
Springfield, Nilgris,
5th June 1937.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

* I do not know how you got the impression that the person referred to in your letter spoke to me disparagingly about you and that I have given credence to such disparagement I may assure you that you need not have any apprehensions of this kind. I am not easily prejudiced by reports that I receive about people. I form my own conclusions. I have had from my friends accounts of the splendid work you have done in the State in many directions, and I shall always be glad to have the opinion of an experienced public man like you on matters relating to the State.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. Srammukham Chetty.

Again, on 5-11-1937, he wrote to me thus: "Thank you for the suggestions contained in your letter, especially those relating to rural reconstruction. I am trying to have this work organised on an effective basis, the idea being to co-ordinate the activities of the Government Departments dealing with village work. I shall be delighted to have your suggestions from time to time." Once again, on 22-3-1938, he wrote to me in a similar strain: "I shall always be glad to have your co-operation and your advice in the discharge of my duties."

On 2nd July 1938, Sir K. Ramunni Menon entertained the Diwan at a Garden Party at Trichur. For that, my friend came and invited in person me and my wife, and, what is more, insisted on our being present at the function. So, we went. After refreshments, Sir K. Ramunni Menon sent for his brother and me; and, on his introducing me to the Diwan, some one who stood by said that we knew each other. Then the Diwan, said, "For the matter of that, to any one coming to Cochin, Mr. Krishna

Menon will be the first or at least the second individual to be known in the State." To my remark that he was laying it too thick, he said "No, no; certainly not." Anyhow, I escaped to an inconspicuous corner, and, with my wife, slipped out and returned to our quarters.

While in Cochin, Sir Shammukham Chetty went to Europe to be present at some conference. He took with him Mr. Elamama Krishna Menon as his Private Secretary. On his return, the Diwan was presented with a civic address, on 23-11-1958, by the people of the Ernakulam town. The preliminary public meeting to take steps for that was held in the local Muslim School, with myself as Chairman. When my name was proposed in that capacity to the Executive Committee, I suggested that not me but Mr. V. D. Onseph should be the Chairman. The Municipal Chairman, Mr. A. B. Mohamed, Mr. E. Mampilly, Mr. P. C. Varkey and a few others, including myself, were on the Committee.

The Committee met almost daily at Mr. V. D. Onseph's house. At the first meeting, Mr. V. D. Onseph announced that he had reliable information that the Honble. Minister and two others were arranging an All-Cochin address to him. The Committee authorised the Chairman to negotiate with them for an amalgamation under certain conditions. The members, had they known of the other movement, would not have held even the public meeting. The All-Cochin affair was not discussed at any public meeting. The Hon. Minister subsequently told Mr. Onseph that he joined it under a mistake and took a prominent part in our function also. We proceeded on strictly constitutional lines. The All-Cochin address was presented from a pandal in front of the Ernakulam Railway Station; ours from the Menaka Theatre to which we took the Diwan in a grand procession.

Some time after, to be precise, on 8-4-1939, Dr. T. K. Krishnaswami, the Municipal Chairman and Mr. T. P. Ponlose, the Deputy President of the Legislative Council, came to me for my signature as one of the conveners of a public meeting to concert measures for raising a statue of Sir Shanmukham Chetty. I regretted to them my inability to do so. Then they said that Messrs. A. Sankara Menon, Kodur, Kandir Menon and others had signed the notice. I told them that no statue should be raised to a Diwan while he was in office; and, then, as ours was not a rich country like Europe and America, we should try to erect structures or to start institutions, as memorials, that will benefit the country and its people. They said they would come again and, in the meanwhile, I could think over the matter. Next day when they came, I signed the paper with much reluctance; and, at the same time, I wrote to the Diwan on the subject, and informed Dr. A. R. Menon, the Minister, and also Mr. Kurur Nampathiripad, the President, and Mr. K. Ikkanda Warriar, the Secretary of the Congress party, to induce the Diwan not to countenance the movement. Thus it did not proceed further.

During the period covered by the three rulers, there were several British Residents. But, of these, I came to know only three: Mr. C. W. E. Cotton, Col. D. M. Field and Mr. C. P. Skrine; and my avenue of approach to these was cultural and not political. All the three were fine literary men; all have travelled much and studied a good deal of the lands they have visited. Mr. Skrine is an authority on Central Asia and has written a fine book about the parts of it in which he had served as a British Officer. Col. Field too has in manuscript the beginnings of a similar book, but, during the period we met, he used to

enliven the pages of the *Blackwood* magazine with only stories and articles composed in a humorous vein. The volume of Mr. Cotton's *Speeches and Writings* has about it a catholicity of taste and a university air.

In 1937 October, when my friend, Dr. Kalidas Nag of the Calcutta University, visited Cochin, he consented to deliver a lecture in the Maharaja's College on his impressions of Bali, Java and other places contiguous to them which he had visited. Principal Mr. Narasimha Pai tried to get Mr. Cotton to preside, but failed. So he came to me to see if I could induce him to do so. I went to him and, in the course of a general talk, introduced the subject of the Greater India Society of which Dr. Nag was the Secretary and spoke of Dr. Nag and his work in high terms. He said he himself had travelled through the places about which Dr. Nag was to speak. "Then I wish you will kindly preside over the meeting. Dr. Nag will feel highly honoured by your presence", I said. "I have no time to prepare a speech. If I shall not be asked to speak, I shall come," he replied. "It is left to the Chairman to speak or to remain silent, I suppose. But, if the inspiration of the moment impels you to speak, please be guided by it." He laughed. I pretended I was serious. He came and delivered a discourse as interesting and instructive as that of the lecturer himself. Dr. Nag was much pleased with his presence and his performance.

Dr. Nag referred to Mr. Cotton in a letter that he sent me from Calcutta on the 5th of December of that year. "... May I request you to kindly convey my respectful salutations to the consort, Lady Rama Varma? She impressed me as 'an ideal Aryan woman', ... and I drew great inspiration from her conversation. I have spoken about her to a gathering of our Girl's College here.

"Many thanks for your remembering me to Mr. Cotton. He struck me as a rare type of truly cultured civilians who are genuinely interested in our Indian culture. I have received a printed notice of his Kerala Society"

So he was; and he liked Kerala better than any other part of India; and Bolghatty most. "I must say I prefer warm rain and would much rather be at Bolghatty than Ooty. He knew every ancient, aristocratic family in Kerala and every one who was worth knowing there. One day, he abruptly told me: "Look here, Krishna Menon, Glasco has a marketable value. Don't tie him up with any imprudent Raj's ugly daughter." It was only after that hint that I myself came to know that there was a rumour of that effect. When I expressed surprise at the name, he called his cousin, Mr. W.L.B. Egerton who was with him, introduced me to him, and remarked that I didn't know my own son. I was then told that Mr. Egerton too was a Cambridge man like my son, and that Glasco was the sportive name of my son in his college there. Mr. Egerton, I am happy to say, has been an intimate personal friend of my wife, son Sankaran and of myself ever after he came to know us in the November of 1925. He owns an intellect of remarkable range and power and his presence always diffused a gentle, compelling radiance. His ability as an officer he has shown, wherever he went, as also his capacity for doing good. I am sure his high noon will keep the freshness of his morn in his official life.

"I am always keen to read about Malabar", so he wrote to me once, "and especially anything written by you, and so will be very grateful if you will tell the Government Press to send me per V. P. P. *The Progress of Cochin* in due course, when it is ready."

Like Mr. Cotton and Mr. Egerton, Sir D.M. Field also came to love Malabar. From London he wrote

to me, "It is curious to consider the contrast between this great, noisy city and the peace and quiet of the palm-fringed beaches of Malabar." As I came to know him, I found he had all the equipment of a great diplomat. To none but true friends he will open his heart; with them the flow of talk will be free and animating.

Once he wanted me to send him my copy of the *Pulse of Oxford*. On its return he wrote, "It is admirably written, and the author has succeeded in showing that the pulse of Oxford still beats at a healthy and normal rate. You will probably agree with me in thinking that the great difficulty which we, of the older generation, experience is to keep in sympathetic touch with the changing views of the young. This book helps in this respect."

"I read the resumé of your harbour speech with interest."

On this subject he delivered himself of his opinion in this dexterous fashion. "Do you not think that the project stands a greater chance of success, and that the State money will be more secure, under an arrangement whereby Cochin retains sovereignty over the harbour but allows the Government of India to manage the Harbour, and so gives it a guarantee which will command the confidence of the world? This seems to me to be the problem in a nut-shell, and it is really a contest between sentiment and reason. It is a problem which every thinking man in Cochin will have to consider for himself, for I believe that, in the last resort, the majority in Cochin will have their way, whatever that may be." And, as a parting gift to an anxious friend, he remarked, "If I were an inhabitant of Cochin, I should probably think as you do; and you may be right in any case. I don't think there is any chance that the Government of India will in any way oblige Cochin to cede jurisdiction against her will."

On another subject we once had a talk. I told him that, on a consideration of the trend of events in Cochin, it would be desirable, for the future welfare of the State, to have, as was the case in Mysore for a long time, two councillors to assist the Diwan in the administration of the country. He agreed with my view. I then sought the help of my friend Mr. K. Chandy, who retired as the First Councillor of Mysore, for a copy of the Council Rules of Mysore.

Aymanore,

14-9-

My dear Aniyar,

I am sending the Council rules. I have been permitted to send them to you with instructions that they should be kept confidential and returned to me. I hope you could manage to get the Madras Rules also, and then get some one to frame Rules for your State. Please own receipt.

Yours affectionately,

Sd. K. Chandy.

I framed a set of Rules that would suit our State, showed it to Mr. Herbert and then got it typed. One copy Sir Field took with him. But nothing came of it. I think that a Council with the Diwan and two ministers will go a good way for sane administration and its continuity.

With Mr. and Mrs. Skrine my acquaintance was short. They left Cochin before it had time to ripen into friendship. On my invitation, Col. Field once gave a talk to the Lotus Club, and Mr. Skrine before the Rotary Club, both with magic lantern illustrations. Both were lively and punctuated by seals of laughter from appreciative audiences. After his visit to our Cochin Rotary Club, I sent him a copy of my speech on *The Rotary Spirit*. "I read your eloquent and felicitous Rotary address with much pleasure. I will take a fresh interest in the movement as a result."

The first time we met at Bolghatty, we had a long talk about the dance and Kathakali of Kerala, and, incidentally, about the Art procession and fireworks during the festival in the Ernakulam temple. Mr. and Mrs. Skrine then expressed a desire to see them; and I gladly made arrangements for them to witness these. He took a real interest in antiquarian researches as will be obvious from his book on Central Asia. So, one day, I sent him a pamphlet of mine. This acknowledgment I got for it.

The Residency,
Bolghatty,
Cochin. 5-1-38.

My dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

Please don't send me any more of your books in office hours: they keep me from my work. For the past hour, I have been absorbed in *Dravidian Culture*, and telegrams, letters, files remain unattended to on my side table. Many thanks indeed for giving me a copy. I shall be very glad to have a talk with you one day about it, for I am greatly interested in Indian ethnology.

Yours sincerely,

Ed. C. P. Skrine.

P.S. Do come to see us, both of you. Shall we say Friday 7th at 12 noon?

--coOo:--

XV. MY LINKS WITH THE SISTER STATE

I like Travancore, very much indeed. It is a model State, and, true to its motto, 'Charity is her household Divinity'. I am interested in her welfare. For the matter of that, I sincerely believe that, for the glory of Kerala and its cultural development,

Cochin, Travancore and British Malabar must be united and must work as one country. In their political administration, they have to behave as three different units; necessarily; but, in every other aspect, they can easily pull on together as one. Every Malayali must remember that, and work to realise that consummation. That has ever been my aim; my friends know that very well.

I had, still have many friends and well-wishers in Travancore. The first person, apart from my teachers, with whom I became acquainted was Mr. Caramana Krishna Pillay, who was an Inspector of Schools in Travancore. Mr. Abraham, Mr. J. Chandy, Mr. Thummi, Mr. T. C. Cheriyen, Mr. Mani and Mr. K. Koshi, all these teachers of mine, were natives of Travancore. Even Mr. Mathan Munshi came from there. Among these, Mr. Chandy and Mr. Koshi were on very friendly terms with me till death closed their worldly career. Mr. Koshi had a streak of indolence in his make-up. That was noticeable in every act of his. So that, I thought, I was lucky in getting an occasional letter from him. The last was dated,

Kottayam.

26th November 1925.

My dear Kunhi Krishnan:

I have been far from well lately My eyesight also is somewhat affected. Speaking generally, I think I have gone perceptibly lower down hill than at the usual rate

"Ventures and Adventures at Cambridge" in the *College Magazine* attracted my attention by its title, and I read it through before anything else. But I had no idea who the writer was. In fact, I did not know you had a grown-up son. I had only heard of your having a graduate daughter. Her mother told me about her when I met her the other day. I knew

her name also, and hence had no difficulty in identifying the writer of this article

I hope you are keeping good health in spite of hard work. Do not overtax your energies and do not give way to worry, and there is nothing to fear from heavy work.

With kind regards to Mrs. Krishna Menon and yourself.

Yours affectionately,

Sd. K. Kosbi

Both my Asans, Mr. Warier and Mr. Kurup, were Travancorites. I think of all these with respect and pay my obeisance to them before I take leave of them.

I was in the pre-matriculation class when I came to know Mr. Charamana Krishna Pillay. He took a fancy for me, I suppose, and I liked him very much. He wanted the Sister States to meet their fates as ours. He wrote to me later that the bonds between the two should be cemented by inter-marriages. He was a great man who was loved and respected by his countrymen. Of the Nayar Society, he was an acknowledged guide and leader. It was he who first worked for the formation of Nayar Societies. He asked me to start similar societies in Cochin, or, at least, to try to hold a conference of his Nayar Samaj here. It was during the early days of the abdicated ruler. I pointed out to him, after consulting Mr. Padmanabha Menon, the difficulties that stood in my way. He replied he 'fully realised them', and requested me to co-operate with him in his work in Travancore. From here I could assist but little; that little I did willingly and to his satisfaction.

The next person with whom I have become closely united is Rajatantrapravina Mr. K. Chandy, who entered the Mysore Civil Service, and retired, after a creditable official career there, as the First Councillor. We came to know each other from the F. A. Class,

and, ever after, have moved as very intimate friends. While I was in the Presidency College, Mr. Koshi insisted on my visiting Rev. Dr. Miller, the famous Principal of the Christian College. Mr. Chandy assisted me to carry out this behest. Mr. K. Ramamuni Menon and myself went to pay our respects to the great educationist. As "Chandy's friends" the welcome was warm, and the talk educative. When we two stood up to take leave of Dr. Miller, he closed in his hands the right palms of the three of us and said with genuine emphasis, "You three must be friends, must always be friends." To the very letter I have tried to follow his advice. There was no icy reserve between Chandy and myself, and his high official position never for once threw any delicate obstacle in the even tenor of our brotherly relations.

Rao Bahadur P. I. Varugis is another whose acquaintance I struck from the same class. Of him too I can say all what I have said of Mr. Chandy. The only difference between the two is that Mr. Varugis is a bit of a born diplomat, and has cultivated his judicial bent of mind a degree more than my other friend. Of course, he never tried his arts of diplomacy on me. He rose to be the First Judge of the Chief Court of Cochin, and his judgments are, for the enunciation of legal principles, for the firm clearness in the unravelling of complicated questions of jurisprudence and for the elegance in language, of a high order indeed. After he took his pension, he expressed to me a desire to enter the Legislative Council. When I put the matter before Mr. Herbert, he said it was not a bad idea, and he readily accepted by suggestion that a seat could be found for my friend by combining in one the reserved seat for the lady and the one for the Anglo-Indian Community by the nomination of an Anglo-Indian lady to the Council. Thus, he got into the Council, and, on 3-7-1931, came to thank me in person for the help I gave him. But, owing to the

departure of Mr. Herbert, Mr. Varugis was not able to realise the full advantage of his adventure. Once he wrote to me that, among his many friends in Cochin, I have stood by him in all the varied vicissitudes of his life.

In contra-distinction to this Mr. Varugis, who was called Cochin Varugis, perhaps, because, he lived in Cochin during his college days, Mr. P.C. Varghese was called the Kottayam Varghese. He and I came together in class B, presided over by Mr. Abraham from Parur. He was well-known for his innocent mischief in the class, and had in him a tinge of pugnacity. As a lawyer, and a trader later, he shone, and he made his pile. He did much good to Ernakulam as a Municipal Chairman. But he treated Cochin badly in his Vadav-de speech, and I had to give him a smashing reply. We were good friends from start to finish, and it was my privilege to pave the path for him to get a Veerasinkhala and a Rao Sahib. He himself would confess that he owned not a very soft heart, so that it was a revelation to me when once he told me that a perusal of my wife's *Visha Vrisha* brought tears to his eyes. I replied that it was the greatest compliment that he could have paid to my wife's literary effort.

Yet of another Mr. Varghese I wish to say here, though he came into my ken long after. It is of Diwan Bahadar Dr. V. Varghese that I propose to speak. My wife and myself were first introduced to Dr. and Mrs. Varghese at a Garden party in the Hill Palace. There was a severe storm and rain on that occasion. Several of the guests were badly drenched; the ladies suffered worse. Mrs. Varghese was wet all over and was, besides, trembling from cold. My wife saw her, took her in and helped to change her dress and to make herself otherwise also comfortable. That was the beginning of our friendship which all along has had a glorious career. Her weak body is

no index of the power of Mrs. Verghese's will for doing good. Hers is a name to conjure with in the social world. The Y.M.C.A. at Ernakulam owes not a little to her organising capacity. She is ever active, sleepless in her service to her sisters. Mr. Verghese is not alone a doctor, but also a statesman and diplomat. These additional qualifications in no way diminished the quality of his professional equipment which is well-known all over Malabar. Before he became the Chief Medical Officer of this State, he was a District Medical Officer in the British Service. He has the ideal manner of a doctor; even his mesmeric word or hypnotic touch would at times send a patient cured. When he left Ernakulam to settle down in his palatial residence at Thiruvalla, he left my wife and myself in the medical charge of our friend Dr. Koshi Mathew. Dr. Koshi Mathew, a Travancorean, is a man of faith, and so, perhaps, he tries to do his best for his patients. He is a silent, social worker. He is much attached to my family, and my wife and myself regard him as a member of our household. Dr. Verghese and myself were much together in the Legislative Council also, where he showed what an eloquent, effective speaker he could be. Whenever there was anything stirring or sensational, he would take me into his confidence, and would even show me his reply for my revision. Once Dr. A. R. Menon delivered himself into his hands by referring him as the Rasputin of the Cochin State. The reply, which tore the points of his opponent's arguments into shreds and cast them to the four winds, was delivered in the best parliamentary manner. To have heard him then was really a treat. The good he did, particularly to the Leper Asylum, deserves to be remembered by its inmates and the public.

Of Mr. Kandathil Verughese Mappillay, Mr. G. P. Pillai, and Dr. Krishnan Pandalai, the Judge, I have already written. It is not possible to enumerate the

names of all my true friends, nor to say all what I want to say about my dear friends. I have no chimerical ambition like that either. My idea is just to refer to them to show how much I value their friendship. To me it is sacred, and I regard it as a valuable asset of mine.

Dr. Gopinath Pandalai, a brother of Judge Pandalai, is an F.R.C.S. of the London University, and one of the most distinguished surgeons in India. Of him too I have had my little say. Of Mr. Ambalapuzha Krishna Pillay I can only speak with regret. His only daughter, who was his pet and who was married to Mr. V. K. Rama Menon, a son of Lady Rama Varma, died young. Her loss weighed on him, and he too died before his time. Had he lived, he would have become the Diwan of Travancore. He and his wife were much to my wife and myself.

Mr. M. Govinda Pillai and myself came to know each other when he came out to Cochin as the Superintendent of the Kondalunpikkam Devaswam. Ever after we have been good friends. After working as a Secretary, as the Director of Co-operative Societies and the Census Commissioner, he retired from the Travancore Service and became the first elected Mayor of the Travandrum Municipality. He is ever cheerful and is brimful of genuine enthusiasm. A cousin of his is married to my relative and young friend, Mr. T. C. Rama Menon, M. A., M. Sc., the Diwan of the Nilgiri State.

There is yet another of whom I must say a few words. No doubt, he was out of Travancore from his college days; yet he was born and bred up there till he closed his teens. I refer to my friend, Mr. K.P.S. Menon, I.C.S. Look at him in any way you like, — he is a great man. There is no doubt about it. Left to himself, he would, perhaps, be happy with a book under a shady tree in a quiet garden. But he has the

MY LINKS WITH THE SISTER STATE

sense in him of the poetry of existence. He is not an austere man. He is immensely fond of his wife and children. He is a genial host and a delightful companion. As an officer, he is capable of the severest exertion, and his intelligence and attainments can easily cope with any task with calm and dignified judgment. I feel rejoiced over the privilege of his friendship. I may be forgiven for transcribing a few lines from a valued letter of his to me: "I have often wondered how strangely the old-fashioned way of addressing each other as "My dear Friend" has gone out of use. Perhaps, it is just as well, for, in these days of countless casual acquaintances and few real friendships, there are not many who may be addressed thus. You are one of the very few whom I could consciously have the privilege of addressing as a friend; and so I use it.

"We are hoping to leave for Chungking soon in August. In the meantime, this work in Jodhpur is an interesting interlude.

"I am sorry your time in Cety had to be abruptly cut short on account of an alarmist medical report. We are so thankful that it did turn out to be a larva only. With your happy knack of understatement you have said that you "have done an honest labourer's work and are ready to quit." I endorse the first part of your statement; but strongly object to the second. It reminded me of the beautiful lines of Lander:—

"I strove with none, for none was worthy my
strife.

Nature I loved and, next to Nature, art;

I warmed both hands before the fire of life;

It sinks; and I am ready to depart."

There are few to whom the first two lines are more appropriate than yourself. Lander wrote these lines on his 75th birthday and lived for 14 years more; and my prayer is that in respect of longevity you may equal, if not outdo Lander.

"Sir Donald and Lady Field exchanged reminiscences of you with us a few nights ago. They are charming; so were the reminiscences.

"My wife sends her love to you both."

When he was appointed as the Agent-General of the India Government in China, he thus kindly wrote to me: "I must write and ask for your blessings before we leave for China."

Sri Narayanan Thampi, the son of His Highness Sri Mulam Thirunal, regarded me as a friend of his. His wife is a daughter of Mr. M. Rajaraja Varma. My wife and myself were always welcome in the magnificent house of Mr. and Mrs. Sri Narayanan Thampi. When they halted at Ernakulam, in the March of 1920, on their way to Benares, they were my guests, and they spent two pleasant days with us. I went with them to Cochin, Kalati and the Hill Palace. G. V. was the tour agent.

Among friends in the literary world, I may mention, over and above those whose names have already appeared in these pages, the names of Messrs. Kottarathil Sankunni, Udaya Varma and Rajaraja Varma of Mavelikkara, Kottaram, Judge P. K. Narayana Pillay, Rao Sahib, Mohakavi, Sahityabushanan Ullur S. Parameswara Iyer, Vatekkankoor Rajaraja Varma Raja and Dr. L. A. Ravi Varma. Both by his prose and poetical works, Mr. Sankunni has enriched our literature. There is an ease and charm about his writings which make them appeal even to the unlettered masses. Mr. Udaya Varma has invested his productions with an aristocratic grace. In spite of his onerous duties as a high public officer, Mr. Rajaraja Varma has found time to make solid contributions to the Malayalam Literature, and even to open up new channels through which it could be developed. The greatness of P. K. needs proclaiming. He never advertised himself, nor did he gather around

him any crowd of idolaters to do it for him. For, he never paid any tributes to the fashions of the passing hour, nor withheld his scorching criticism for the irreverence of the moderns against the ancients. His weighty publications also, the matured fruits of his devotion to his mother-tongue, were not such as would lend themselves to the easy comprehension of the halting poetasters and the ubiquitous journalists. His courage was extraordinary. When duty pointed the way, he never shirked to deal with living persons and the burning issues of the day. When he was lying on his death-bed, a physical wreck, his legs amputated, he dictated pages of his masterly autobiography against the warning directions of his Doctor. His friendship to me baffles all real repentments. I can only treasure it as an unpaid account of debt.

The three last and myself move as brothers. Their love for our literature is limitless, their industry is prodigious. Dr. Davi Varma is an authority on scripts. The works of these three are legion. Dignified and solid with deep erudition; works that will outlive all whim and any weather. Ullur, a man of protean parts, is a host in himself — by his profound erudition, amazing memory and prodigious output. Vadakkankoor owns a rare combination of scholarship with humility. He never mingles in the hurly-burly. He only sees life from afar. He is no doubt sad to see that the solid foundations of society and literature are being dashed to pieces. His abiding faith in the working of Providence carries him on. The names of these three are safe in the hands of Time. Their work is not done. They are busy over it with patriotic fervour. May the Goddess of Learning increase their tribe.

In connection with his *Shashtya-Lapoorthi*, Ullur wrote to me a letter on 14-6-1937 in which these sentences occur: "I am fully cognisant of all

that you have done in Knnakulam on my behalf on this occasion, and I can never forget this characteristic kindness on your part. I need hardly say that I feel so grateful to you. I request you to convey my indebtedness to Mrs. Krishna Menon also. You have been more than an elder brother to me for several decades now, and your *anugraha* (blessing) on an occasion like this is of inestimable value to me."

Once I had occasion to take Mr. M. Itajaraja Varma to task for his long silence. His reply was prompt. "Your illusion that I have thrown overboard our age-long friendship has pained me to the quick. I have valued it as an asset in my life. . . . It has taken deep root in my heart and age has only doubled its tenacity. . . . My age, domestic unhappiness, loss of close friends, new and unaccustomed environments have all told on me. . . . That explains my reserve. . . . Please convey to your good wife my sincere felicitations and tell her that I am still your old friend Mr. Itajaraja Varma."

Major Suedar K. M. Panicker M. A. (Dxon.), Barrister-at-law, is another who had come into my ken, and visited my house on more occasions than none. We were good friends; but, after a passing and not a pleasant episode, in which I was but a silent sufferer, he cut me adrift and left me to mourn the loss of a friendship that would have been fruitful to both of us, at any rate to me. None the less, I have ever been an admiring reader of his varied and valuable contributions to the enrichment of both Malayalam and English literatures. And in the evening of my life, I am happy to suppose that he has again begun to see me in a clear, cloudless sky. By his own merits he has risen to an enviable position, both in the literary and official worlds. He is an ornament to our community.

But I have to request all my friends to stand aside to enable me to pay my humble respects to His Highness Sir Sri Balarama Varma, the Maharaja of

Travancore, to his talented mother, Her Highness Sri Seta Parvathi Bai, the Maharani of Travancore, and to Her Highness Sri Seta Lakshmi Bai, the Senior Maharani. From these I have received nothing but kindness. I distinctly remember the six visits I paid to Trivandrum. About the first three I have already written. The first time I went there was in search of an appointment. The second visit I paid was in 1925 to learn all about the Council work, and the third as a Commissioner of the Madras University. That was in 1934. The next three were in 1936, 1937 and 1942, respectively, for attending the Paristat and Oriental Conferences and a meeting of the Faculty of Oriental Studies of the Travancore University. On all occasions but the first one, I sought and was granted interviews with Their Highnesses. They dressed in a simple manner, in spotless white, and seemed indifferent to the frailties of fashion. They had on them only an irreducible minimum of even gold. But there was about their carriage a sense of power and high estate, and their inborn stateliness of nature would, I thought, effectively ward off any unwarrantable intrusion of the profane vulgar. After the formal introduction, by a prefatory sentence or two, they put the visitor at ease, and the conversation flowed without interruption. It is a treat to hear them talk. There is an admirable combination of intellect and feeling in it. They have got strong views on subjects and are not afraid to give free vent to them when wanted; but the freedom, one can easily sense it, is under a strict discipline of culture and worldly wisdom; and their simple sentences, never clothed in conventional phrases of high latitudes, hinted a promise of unexplored possibilities. They are zealous for the glory of the State; and they have already made their mark in their domain, made it broader and deeper than, perhaps, many another in other lands.

It is singularly fortunate that His Highness the Maharaja has at his service the mellowed counsel of his great mother and of his Sachivothaman, both endowed with gifts that can doubtlessly be characterised as extraordinary. Her Highness has already shown the wide range of her attainments, and the tireless energy she can command. No nobler duty than to help her son in his grand God-ordained task has appealed to her enthusiasm, and seldom has any undertaking more faithfully performed. His massive forehead, his finely-chiselled aquiline nose, his piercing eyes and his determined mouth give you some hints of the great personality of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer. It looks as if he is not a stranger to any subject, be it one related to law or literature, religion or politics. He has got the unique power of finding the kernel with a lightning speed, and can express his thoughts in words winned with unrivalled eloquence. To the dignity of a high office he adds a scholarship wide and deep. He is a statesman with a courage of a rare type. It is no wonder that he has escaped unscathed out of the pages of Sir Edwin Montague's Indian Reminiscence.

It must warm the heart of every Indian to see His Highness the Maharaja consolidating and developing Travancore in every possible direction. He has made history by his Temple Entry Proclamation. There he followed a glorious vision without counting the cost and the consequences, and did his duty with unfaltering resolution and high courage.

To own a confession, I had my anxious doubts about the propriety of this revolutionary step; and I felt very sad over the straightened relationship that this caused between two sister States. So, I placed the whole matter before my guide and philosopher, Sir Sivaswamy Iyer, whose answer to my letter relieved me not a little.

Sudharma,

Mylapore, May 2, 1937.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

Thanks for your kind letter of the 22nd April. I have not seen the report of the late Diwan Mr. V. Subramanya Iyer. Have you got a copy of it? If the procedure suggested by you had been followed, it would no doubt have avoided the friction which has arisen between the two States, but I doubt very much whether it would have been possible to arrive at a conclusion acceptable to the reform party. The picture you have given of the conduct of worship in the temples at the present time is probably correct. The proclamation was largely inspired by political motives, besides a desire to broaden and liberalise the spirit of Hinduism, remove a sense of grievance among the Harijans and raise their status and self-respect. The spirit of exclusiveness prevalent in our temples has been a target of attack by the followers of other religions. Moreover, there has been, I am told, a great drift towards Christianity among the Harijans, and you will agree that it is desirable to take steps to check this movement for conversion on a large scale. I agree with a great deal of what you say about the desirability of avoiding revolution in social usages. But what would have taken generations has been effected by a stroke of the pen. The proclamation might have caused discontent among the orthodox sections. But, on the whole, I think it was a wise and bold measure. Hinduism badly needed a rude shock to awaken our people to the need of reform. The measure may have the effect of keeping away sections of orthodox Hindus from worship in the temples, and, after a little time, the numbers of Harijans, anxious to avail themselves of the new privilege, may also fall off. But the young Nambudiris have all become reformers, and even the rigidly orthodox people may become reconciled to

the order. Let me state that, though I am orthodox in my practices and moderate in my views, my views are rationalistic and I am convinced of the necessity for making Hinduism as broad in practice as it is in theory.

* * * * *

I think of going for a change to Bangalore about the middle of the month. My wife and I are doing tolerably well.

Thanking you for your kind inquiries and with best regards,

Yours very sincerely,
Sd. P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer.

It was when the air in Cochin was surcharged with the views against the temple entry question that the Oriental Conference was held in Trivandrum. Not to be misunderstood, I made up my mind to be present at it with my wife. At the last moment, she was prevented from coming with me. But every arrangement was made there to make our stay comfortable. Both Mr. Chandrasekharan and Mr. Krishnan Thampi told me that His Highness had particularly asked them to see to it. I felt so grateful to His Highness. At the Garden Party given by His Highness in the Kandiyar Palace to the delegates to the Conference, Mr. Chandrasekharan came running and told me that I was wanted by His Highness. I hurried to his august presence. "I am so glad you came, Mr. Krishna Menon." This remark he repeated. I told His Highness that it was only distance that prevented my daily worship of His Highness' feet. He smiled. Proceeding with the talk, he remarked, "In matters of culture, Cochin and Trivancore should act as one." Echoing which I said, with real feeling, "As a Cochinite, I humbly pray that this thought may ever be in Your Highness' mind." "What doubt is there?" he graciously remarked. After a quarter of an hour,

I bowed and took leave of His Highness, as several others were eagerly waiting to meet him. With Her Highness the Maharani also I had on that occasion the privilege of an interesting conversation. Her Highness talked to me about the South Indian Music and the folksongs peculiar to Kerala. The depth of her knowledge on the subject was obvious from her learned observations.

The first time I met Her Highness the Senior Maharani was when she was ruling Travancore as the Regent. Her Highness and her Consort, the Valiya Koil Tampuran, were living at the Sankhumukham Palace near the seashore, where my wife and myself went with my friend Mr. G. V. Subramanya Iyer. As we neared the palace, we saw His Highness the Koil Tampuran (retiring after his usual morning ride). Coming up, he slowed the speed, and accosted me with a smile, "Mr. Krishna Menon I presume. Please come in." We were called to the presence of Her Highness the Maharani and His Highness the Valiya Koil Tampuran. "We two know all about you. Only we have not seen you before in person. We are glad to see you." From that day, my wife and myself were generously considered by them as members of their household. Needless to say that we regarded them with profound admiration and gratitude.

I am tempted to quote here a few words from the speech of Sir K. Rammuni Menon, which, as the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University, he made on the conferment of the Honorary Degree on Her Highness.

"Her Highness' administration was conducted along liberal lines and was marked by notable progress in many directions. . . . As a Ruler, Her Highness has shown conspicuous courage, devotion to public duty, and solicitude for the welfare of her subjects.

"But she has never allowed her public duties to throw into the shade her responsibilities as a woman and a mother. Her devotion to her home and family has become proverbial. It will be no exaggeration to say of her that she has been a woman among queens as she is a queen among women. Her rare combination of charm, character and achievement has elicited wide-spread appreciation and will go far to sustain the ideal of Indian Womanhood."

Her Highness' consort, His Highness Rama Varma Valiya Koil Tampuran, wrote to me thus about this speech. "Her Highness much appreciates your congratulations on the honour the Madras University has conferred upon her. The felicitous terms in which the Vice-Chancellor referred to Her Highness' work must have gladdened the heart of every one who could with an unprejudiced mind survey her brilliant work during the seven difficult years of the Regency."

On another occasion, he referred to the Regency in this manner. "After the stormy years of the Regency, we are finding our present carefree life immensely enjoyable. The tributes the Viceroy and the A. G. G. paid to Her Highness' work were really heartening, but those apart, she feels that she has done her duty subject to her limitations and according to her light. Therefore she suffers no qualms. The attempts of those who absolutely cry down the Regency and those who damn it with faint praise make no impression upon us."

As an illustration of the power of the aforesaid "rare combination," it may be recalled with pride that, during the days of the well-advertised Vycome Satyagraha, Mahatma Gandhi came to censure Her Highness' regime, but had to depart praising it, and remarking that Her Highness was an ideal of Aryan women, and her "attitude towards the Vaikom question is proper in the circumstances." "This is

gratifying in view of the unmerited abuses showered on Her Highness and her Government by that section of the vernacular press rooted in the Satyagraha cause."

Her attainments are of a rare order; but her innate modesty never gives her a chance for their unfettered exhibition. Once, after reading a few extracts from my lecture on the *Dravidian Culture and its Diffusion*, Her Highness, questioned me if, in the glorification of the culture of ancient Kerala, I had not drawn liberally on a patriotic imagination. I felt the remark as unmerited, and replied with some warmth that the arguments of my thesis were drawn from recorded history, but the inferences were not drawn by me but by competent scholars. I sent her a copy of the lecture which I am glad to say had the honour of a careful perusal from Her Highness. It elicited a generous acknowledgement of the correctness of my contentions.

On another occasion, I was very much pleased to hear from His Highness the Valiya Koil Tampuran that both Her Highness and he read with tears of real joy my review of the Life of His Highness Kerala Varma, whose nephew he is. "It is a great comfort to realise that there are still some who admire His Highness and are not ashamed to honour him". So he said with considerable feeling. He is a good reader and a keen sportsman as his uncle. I value his friendship.

How can any Malayali be anything but grateful to that immortal spirit! In his day, His Highness Kerala Varma, C. S. I., P. M. I. was by right unquestioned, the Chakravarti, of the Kerala literary world. He graced it by his scholarship, his contributions to the literature, each a model in itself, and the patronage he extended to deserving literary men

and learned bodies. The British Government, the University of Madras and Royal Societies in England acknowledged his greatness in appropriate ways. Mr. R. C. Dutt, after his retirement from service, had an All-India tour. From Trivandrum he came to Ernakulam. In the course of a talk between us, he spoke to me in very high terms about the Valiya Koil Tampuran. He said he was simply amazed at his loftiness and majesty and his unrivalled attainments in his several pursuits.

That I should have come in close contact with him, I consider as one of the great blessings of my life. He regarded my wife and myself with a parental solicitude and we actually adored him with profound devotion and gratitude.

Here I think I may with profit give a few extracts from some of his letters to me.

22-5-1900. "I am very glad to hear of your son's progress. Mother's features prognosticate a son's happiness, as father's do a daughter's. (എന്റെ മകന്റെ ഭാഗ്യം അമ്മയുടെ മുഖത്ത് കാണാം.) May your boy have a long, useful and happy life! May God bless him! 18-7-1900. "The children in the photo group you have kindly sent me have all got characteristic expressions and intelligent features. There is as you say a slyness in the expression of your little Janaky which all the more endears her to my mind. Please give her a kiss in my name. Sanjaran seems to be a sedate deep-hearted boy. I think he is destined to become a great man. I wonder who is the other girl". (She is the youngest sister of my wife.)

Trivandrum.
14th Thulam 1906.

My dear Friend,

How can I adequately thank you for your dear letter! It is really charming. I have read it over and over and feel inclined to peruse it again. You

have a partiality for me, as I must own I have for you. It was indeed the consummation of my long cherished desire to have met you and your worthy consort together at Vykkam. It is no exaggeration to say that you are an adorable couple. In this age of Kali such a happy union is rarely found. May God bless you both with long life, sound health and perfect happiness.

"I am not at all surprised to learn from your account that you have a competency. How fortunate it was that you didn't accept a post on Rs. 100 or so.

It is indeed highly gratifying that you are so keenly interested in the Bh. Po. Sabha. If the other members take the same interest as you do, I have no more anxiety.

Most affectionately yours
Sd. Kerala Varma.

29-4-'87. "Kalyani Amma has done well in not closely following the original (*The Poison Tree*). The chapters that I have read appear to me as if they were original. The style is so simple and elegant that one could not think it to be a translation. I have made very few alterations and modifications. Those that I have made are only matters of taste."

30-8-'87. "I used to be regularly informed by my brother, nephew and Mr. Kuppaswami Aiyangar about the great solicitude you and your consort have been evincing during my recent illness and how ardently you were praying and making offerings to your tutelary deity for my speedy and complete recovery."

9-7-'88. "I am sending this day by British post registered a small ring for the kind acceptance of your wife in recognition of the merits of her recent literary production (*Visha vrksham*). No one can be a better judge of the same than myself."

4-10-88 "Your excellent and elaborate introduction to my friend Pantalam Kerala Varma's *Rakman-gada-Charitam* I finished reading only just now. It has really far surpassed my expectation. The perusal of your able introduction will give one a comprehensive knowledge of the scope and merits of the poem itself. I have no doubt this production of yours will be highly valued and fully appreciated by all Pandits including the erudite author of the poem itself."

Between His Highness Kerala Varma Valiya Koil Tampuran and his nephew and worthy disciple the late Professor A. R. Rajaraja Varma, there arose some ill-feeling. The Professor and myself were intimate friends. On his way to and from Madras, where he often went for University work, he would stop with me. I have spent many profitable hours with him on those occasions. We would talk on many literary and scientific subjects and discuss plans for developing out literature. During those months when my tank was full, he would never fail to have a few minutes' swim. On one of those visits, he told me, with evident concern, that his uncle refused to see him when he went to take leave of him, and sought my assistance to effect a complete reconciliation. "Otherwise, Krishna Monon, there is not much joy in my living," he said. Of course I promised to do my best to bring the uncle and the nephew together.

The cause of the temporary difference I shall put in the words of His Highness himself, as recorded in his letter of 29-4-87. "I made my own revisions for another edition of my *Sakuntalam*. But my nephew was not satisfied with them and went on making revisions just as he pleased. The revised edition came out and was severely criticised by the public who didn't approve of the alterations made by my nephew. Then came a second edition from which some of the wrong versions of my nephew were

expunged. Even the people were not satisfied. It was under these circumstances that I thoroughly revised my work and sent it to the Press Those who criticised my composition were all the pupils of my nephew. Their criticisms were very shallow. But they didn't think so. Then they asked my nephew to bring out another translation. Without telling me a word about it, he undertook the task and has now, it appears, finished it. Do you think it pleasant or agreeable to me to go through his work? I have refused to do so."

After receiving my letter, His Highness again returned to the subject. 24-11-1911. "I care not a bit how many translations of *Sakuntalam* are coming out. I was asked by many a savant including yourself to expunge the untidy incorporations made in the recent new editions. I have done so. I don't attach any great importance to the modern canons of criticism. The present edition of my *Sakuntalam* cannot but be acceptable as, if not more so than, my *Peacock Messenger* to the literate of Malabar.

"Please rest assured that the relations between me and my nephew are as cordial as ever."

On 27-11-1911, the nephew also wrote to me a very long letter, detailing the talk between the two, and the terms of publication of the Professor's own rendering. A few sentences I shall quote from it, as they are pertinent to the present topic. "After a few minutes' talk on the subjects of the day, he broached the subject of the *Sakuntalam* and told me in what strong terms you had written to him to bring about a reconciliation. I said I too had received a letter from you on similar terms advising me to beg His Highness' pardon. This led to a discussion of the whole affair. I said I meant to publish it only if His Highness would give his full and willing permission. He said that he would then ask me

to publish my book plainly stating in the Preface that the work was undertaken on behalf of my students and without the consent of my Preceptor and the first translator of the original. Such a command, I said, pained me much and added boldly that, if it is not to contain the dedication on its first page, my book would *never* see the light of day. This strongly worded appeal had its desired effect and he consented to the dedication. . . . Instead of calling it a *vasānam*, (dedication) I would designate it *smṛtyārambham* (remembrance of the preceptor); for the translation was, in fact, begun without consulting my preceptor. This was agreed upon. . . . Thus I have given you an account of a 15 minutes' conversation. You will do the needful in the matter and conclude a work of reconciliation so kindly and philanthropically begun. In short, consider me as one of your clients in this matter and believe me, Ever affectionately yours, (Sd.) A. R. Rajaraja Varma."

The needful was done. But Time, the great healer, alone restored complete harmony between the two.

There is yet another cord that binds me to Travancore. Two of the outstanding persons that gave me signal help for my spiritual progress belonged to that country. They were Swami Sivauanda and the well-known Chattampi Swami. The talks I had with Nilacandha Tirthar, a disciple of Chattampi Swami, were on literary and socio-religious topics. He was a great Sanskrit scholar. His life is published by two of his scholarly *sisyhas*. It is a substantial contribution to the biographical literature in Malayalam and well worthy of the great man whose life it portrays. Chattampi Swami had a very high opinion of Tirthar, but would say in a humorous way that he had the look of a Muslim Thangal and his voice resembled the sound that a coconut-shell gave when violently rubbed on a granite rock. That description

was not far wrong; and he gave my wife the shock of her life when, during the Mappila riots in Malabar, he, for the first time, came to my place one dark night. After the three came to know us, all the three would ordinarily stop with us when they visited Ernakulam. Chattambi Swami once said that in Kumaralayatu he had the 'Asrama-sukham,' the peculiarly calm life of a hermitage. I have come across many great men; but I am yet to know of one like Chattambi Swami. He was a Siddha, one who had realised the Paramatma. He was so modest, so divinely simple that he would never talk of his life, of his marvellous encyclopaedic knowledge, and of the powers he owned. Every animal was his pet; every child liked to be near him in spite of his gray locks of hair and his white flowing beard. He preached and practised *Ahimsa*, the theory of live and let live, of non injury. Two large cloths and an old umbrella formed his worldly possession. One small thing more; a ring made of five metals which he wore on his right small finger. That served him as a drum-stick to keep time for his music. For, he was a remarkable musician. One incident I shall relate. By her persuasive appeal, I should say her pathetic prayer, my wife once prevailed on him to give a talk before the Ladies' Association at Ernakulam. He said it was his first and last public appearance. His subject was "The rights of women and the duties of men." The talk was a short one, but it was full of pregnant sentences, each one of which would serve as a text for a long discourse. To one let me refer here. He said that every letter of an alphabet combined in it, a male part and a female part. In civilised languages, these will have a covering; in other ones, they will be bare. Before the function was over, he returned to my place and having seated himself in his favourite easy chair, he began to hum. I asked him how he came unescorted by my wife. Then, he told

me that some one had started a Hindustani song there in the wrong way. He felt as if his body was on fire, and so he escaped from the place. He sang it in the proper way; other songs followed it till my wife returned. A few of these were hymns from the Sama Veda and some verses from Lalitasahasranamam. How delicious! He chanted Quran like a Moulavi. The Vedas, the Upanishads, the Bible, the six systems of philosophy, he had studied critically. I do not know how many languages he knew; but Tamil was his favourite tongue; and he wrote a learned essay to show that Sanskrit is Tamil refined. His versatility was unrivalled. Extraordinary was he in the breadth and compass of his acquisitions. A smiling asceticism glowed on his noble face. Wherever he went, he radiated spiritual warmth. Yet, withal, he was a humble and unpretentious person. He is a fine instance of an unruly boy, an unbridled adult who became a saint; with an unaffected mildness and friendliness, and a sincere sympathy that embraced the whole world. All that I could glean of him from his talks I have focussed in my introduction to *Sri Chakra-puja Kalpam* composed by him and published by His Holiness Thachudaya Kaimal, a favourite of his. He never cared for his writings. He wrote on small pieces of paper, or on the used books of exercise of schoolboys. One of the two completed works he had once with him he gave to His Holiness Thachudaya Kaimal, and the other to me. These two I edited and formed the *Puja-Kalpam*. I wonder who brought out his *Ancient Kerala* and his *Bible Criticism*. The movements of Sivananda Swami seemed mysterious to me. He would suddenly drop in one day, and would disappear the next day. From where he came and whither he went he never told me, nor could I guess. But I tried to make most of the time he was with me. It was he who advised me to read *Yogasaishtam* and *Trépararahasyam*. Some parts of these

we read together. He also taught me how to recite *Subramanya-Kavacham*, and how to do the breathing-exercise. Once I gave him half-a-dozen post cards with my address written on them, so that he might let me know in advance as to when I could expect him in my place. Not one he used. That was the nature of Sivanandayogi. Their personal presence was very helpful to me. Their spiritual presence equally so.

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XVI MY DAYS AFTER PARTITION.

It was while I was studying in Madras that the partition in my family was effected. My mother took only a passive interest in the division. She and her children were then residing in the Thekkay Madhom, now known as Kumarulayam, in the Diwans' Road. She told those male members of the Tarwad who were busying themselves in the work that she and her issues might be given what they thought was proper. My grandmother and her other daughter wished to go with my mother, so also Mr. Narayana Menon. In connection with partitions, my mother once told me, "If any member over-reach another and try to get more than what he or she had a right to, that member with the share would come to grief. It is certain. God will give us what we are entitled to." Evidently, this non-combative attitude of my mother must have perplexed the mediators in our family-partition. Anyway, she got the ancestral residence, the large Kanom property in Vellamgallur and a few bits of parambas in Ernakulam. She had also the property given us by our father and a small acquisition or two of her own. So we were well off, and my mother's Tavazhi moved to the old family house with its spacious garden of seven or eight acres.

My eldest brother, Mr. Kochunni Menon, was in management of all our properties, both Tarwad and Tavazhi. My eldest sister supervised the household affairs. Both, of course, were under the control of my mother, who was the guiding-star of us all. The other sisters would be with their husbands in stations other than Ernakulam, as also my elder brother. The youngest sister would try to be with mother, now and again; and after the compulsory retirement from service of her husband, she permanently stayed in the Tarwad house. The elder brother, even when he was transferred to Ernakulam, lived with his wife and children in the Thekkalay Madhom. When I came to settle down in Ernakulam, I was by him asked to live there with him, to which course my mother agreed, especially as there was no convenience in the other place to carry on my work as a lawyer. In the family residence, there were also my mother's sister and her two sons and a daughter.—That sister did not live long. The daughter married Mr. Macleod Sankara Menon. The elder boy was blind; for the younger, after his school course, I got a job in a Court in Ernakulam. He worked and thrived well. All lived very harmoniously, a family of happy people, happy with a fine sense of living in a family, devoted to God and to one another, tolerant and tolerating, with mother as the presiding genius whom all adored with their full hearts. Komarambandath Govindan Menon was the *major domo* while Narayanan Nayar, whom many called Mani, reigned supreme in the kitchen. Both these were with my mother from their fourteenth year. Mani though he had a despising expression on his countenance was an excellent cook. When he was not cooking, he would be working in the kitchen garden which furnished fresh, luscious vegetables of different varieties for the consumption of the family. He would never allow any one to enter the kitchen or the garden without his

permission. He actually worshiped my mother, and, somehow, I too had a snug place in his heart.

The Sircar building in which, as Tasildar-Magistrate of Cochin, my father lived, had a large compound in which Narayanan Nair maintained a good kitchen-garden. In its front there was a fine tank, with a small covered platform in the centre of its northern bank. Once, a Saunysi with a handful of followers halted near the tank. One of his disciples cut a few banana leaves from Mani's garden, rolled them up in a bundle, and kept that near where the master sat on the platform, before all of them went to the Mattanchery bazaar for soaking *ulus*. Mani soon sensed the situation, but it was not the culprit but the innocent Saunysi who got two slaps for the stolen leaves. He and his people moved to the Thirumala Devaswom temple. My parents, on coming to know of the incident, refused to take their breakfast till they got the saint's pardon for the rash act of the servant. To pressing solicitations to return, he only replied that the assault had left no ill-will behind in his mind. It was three in the afternoon when he came to the residence and blessed my parents and requested them to break the fast. He refused to take any money or article but only wanted seats in a *pattamar* to go to Gokarnam for the *Sivapatri*. His wish was satisfied; and, on his return, he gave my father a locket to be worn as an effective protection against all poisons. It proved its worth on several occasions in the help it rendered to others.

The blind boy, Kuttan, was a favourite of mine. He knew a bit of music and drumming, and managed to study many hymns and other poetical pieces without much effort. I helped him in all ways; during the holidays, I spent some time with mother; and, even when I lived here in Ernakulam, I used to go to her at least twice a day and be with her as long as was possible for me to do so. For his entertainment,

I organised a *bhajana* performance every month, where provision was made not only for devotional music but also for a *payasam* (pudding). There was, in fact, a sort of simple, spiritual worship in me for my family, which never left me even when unpleasantness was purposely introduced into its working by interested parties to gain their selfish ends.

My eldest brother, after he left service, partnered with Messrs. K. Uzhuthra Warriar and Kozikotte Cheriya Krishna Menon in conducting an abkari business. My mother was not fully for it; and, when brother wanted to utilise the profits derived from it for family purposes, she protested against that course, and would not permit even a pie to be used in that manner. Finally, Mr. Narayana Menon Peishcar, her son-in-law, prevailed on her to put up an upstairs building with that money adjacent to the main house.

Before even the rough plastering of the walls was completed, the eldest brother had, without any previous monition, a stroke of paralysis, and died after a few days. Six months after my elder brother too died of dropsy, a disease which, from his robust health and active habits, he could scarcely have contracted, under normal conditions. Every one of us was disconsolate, mother most so. To add to her agony, another sad incident took place. A debt of Rs. 500 was due to one Embran. It seems that the loan was taken by eldest brother in connection with the elder sister's transaction which, in Ernakulam, were looked after by him. So, one afternoon, while mother was resting, she told her second daughter who, by the way, was rich as well, to liquidate that liability as the creditor had been pressing for payment. To that request, Srimathi Ikkavu Amma gave a rough reply to mother which, under no circumstances and particularly at that time, she should never have given, legally or morally. Mother simply turned her face from her daughter and remained silent. From that

moment, she did not utter a single word to any one till she passed away. Her stout heart carried her on for some more days; then the nervous tension prostrated her. But, till the end, she never complained of anything, but passed her days and, probably, her many sleepless hours at nights, in prayer. She passed away in peace on the 18th of Thulam 1980. With her death, as the people rightly remarked, Maha Lekshmi left our home. Verily it was so. These calamities, coming as they did, one after another in quick succession, entirely unnerved me and made the hair on my head gray. I looked prematurely old. For, I had not then that firm mind and that stout heart which I can now say I owe through the study of the Bhagavat Gita.

When my eldest brother was in a critical condition, Peishcar Nanyana Menon came one day, had the box containing the title-deeds etc., packed by Kumaramkandath Govinda Menon, and carried with him certain documents. What they were I did not know, nor my mother, at any rate, at that time. For, both of us only saw them carried, as we were standing on the eastern side of the main house. My mother just remarked to me, "എന്താണത്ത്? (What is that egg?) (Should this be done now? There is God.) Brother died a day or two after this incident. This was in the Karkidagam of 1978. My elder brother died in Kumbham 1979. I believe he had some premonition that he would pass off on a particular day. When he became ill, he was on leave at Trichur. He came at once to me. I placed him under my friend, the well-known doctor C. Ramanni Menon, who gave his best care to the case. My wife and myself nursed him and looked after every comfort of his; my sister-in-law was all along with us to assist us. At one time, we wanted to take him to Madras. I made every arrangement for the trip and the stay there. But, when the subject was broached to him, he said

he would start after a specified date; and on that date he died. The day I knew that the case was hopeless, I went into a room, bolted it, and had a good cry from there to ease my sad feelings. I never came out, though called by several for my meals, because of my aversion to worry others with my grief. In the afternoon, I came out emboldened to meet the catastrophe. That evening, my mother came to see her dear son. Of course, she was not told of the dangerous condition of the patient. I took her to him and then went round the garden with her before she returned home. Mr. Ichatharu Menon, the uncle of my brother's wife, was here then. I saw my sorrow in the morning and the bold face I had put on in the evening, and the way I conducted myself in the presence of my mother. He said to me, "This is just what you should have done, Aniyar." After my brother's death, his funeral ceremonies and the feeding of the poor were all done in an appropriate manner at my own expense. In carrying these out, Mr. Mathur Sankara Menon and Mr. Thestumpilli Narayana Menon assisted me immensely. Mr. Narayana Menon deserves a word for himself. He was a great friend of Peishear, Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon and of my brother. He had also the confidence of His Highness the Maharaja who had his demise at Madras. The abdicated Ruler did not like him, because he wrote against the administrative acts of Diwan Rajagopala Chari, espoused the cause of the accused in the famous Forest Case, and was on the side of the Koodalmanickam Devaswam in the fight it carried on against this State. When he died, he was the Assistant Superintendent of that Devaswam. He liked my wife and me very much, and stopped with us when he happened to be in Ernakulam. He was with my brother during his fatal illness; in fact, I got him down for that purpose. He was a good talker; so that he could easily beguile the leaden hours of my ailing

brother. His only complaint against me was that I would not allow him to malign any one in my presence. That was a rule I strictly enforced. My wife and myself called him "ആളാള" (the cat of the illam), because he was privileged to go anywhere and talk anything he liked. And because he was born on "uthrathil - kal", he would never, so we used to say, go without a good feed. He was ever loyal to us, and would not tolerate any one to speak ill of us. I miss him in these cyclonic days; for he was a true patriot and dared to do anything for his country. My brother died on the anniversary of Narayana Menon's birthday.

It was a few months after this that my mother took her vow of silence, became emaciated and was forced to take to her bed. It was then thought desirable to consult the Pazhur Kaniyan, the great astrologer, about the strange happenings in the family. Mr. Thathampilli was deputed for that mission. To get through the work without delay, he was armed with a letter from His Highness Rama Varma Kochunni Thampuran to the senior Namparipad of the Pazhur Mana, whose tenant the astrologer was.

The astrologer's house stood a few miles away from the nearest cart track. That distance had to be covered by walking. He rarely or never visited Enakulam, and had not the remotest idea about my house and its inmates. Still, strange to say, he said that Narayana Menon had gone there to him in connection with the oldest, ailing, female member of a family, whose two sons had then recently died, and the third had no chance of performing the funeral ceremonies of the lady. These misfortunes, he added, were precipitated by the unscientific construction of a house which also trespassed into a prohibited area in the compound, by the cutting for that purpose of a fruit-tree under which several images of certain deities

lay, and also by narrowing a quadrangle of the old house. These were true to the very letter. The ominous remark about the third son upset my eldest sister; she therefore despatched a messenger to request the great astrologer and architect, the Valia Kochunni Thampuram of Cranganore, kindly to come. He came, looked into the chart written by the Pazhur Kaniyan, took the necessary measurements of the house and found most of his observations correct. Before he went back, he suggested certain remedial measures which were immediately carried out. On hearing of his arrival, I went to see him, when he observed, "Were you frightened by these people?" To which my sister answered, "We have not shown him the chart, nor told him of it as yet." "Oh! there is nothing for you in person to fear." But the remark of the Kaniyan, however, came true.

My mother passed away peacefully! I was sorry she did not die on the same star as that of my father. She was about ten minutes late. There was an ideal married life.

I started the performance of the funeral ceremonies along with my sisters. But, on account of the number of baths I had to undergo, and as I had to wear wet cloths while engaged in carrying out the rites, my dyspepsia, my inseparable companion, grew worse and turned into dysentery. On the seventh day, at about one in the noon, I got high fever and lost consciousness and gained it only on the next morning. My friend, Dr. C. Ramani Menon, was with me the whole night. I asked him leave to continue the ceremonies, come what would. He sternly refused it. Then, I told him, as a last alternative, that I would positively perform them on the 15th and 16th days, days that were most important. To this end, he had to hasten the cure which, though effected, yet resulted in colitis. This, in different degrees of severity, has been more or less tormenting me ever since. My

dietary, the course of treatment which Ramunni Menon prescribed, my wife's care, light exercise and regular habits have rendered the disease harmless to me and preserved my life so far.

Once a shrewd astrologer told me that I had been suffering from a bad disease, but it could not do away with my life as I was destined to carry out "a number of noble works." Honestly speaking, till the amazing remarks of the Pazhur Kaniyan, I had not seriously thought of astrology. Even when it affected me personally, I made no reliance on it. For, when Mr. Karatt Achyutha Menon, who used to examine every horoscope that he could get hold of, once examined mine and warned of stormy days for me, I made light of his remarks. He then approached Mr. K. Rama Menon and spoke to him of the seriousness of the situation, according to his reading of the horoscope, and even suggested that my friends should subscribe a sum for having certain propitiatory ceremonies performed to ward off the evil consequences. Rama Menon, though not then a believer in astrology, conveyed all this information to my brother. He at once sent my horoscope to Irinjilukudy to have it examined by that eminent astrologer, Thekkey Warrieth Kuttan Warriar. He sent word that Mr. Achyuta Menon was right, and as to how the evil was to be averted. Under his supervision, my dear brother got the costly ceremonies performed from Trichur, so that our mother might not know anything about the matter. Just when the last rite in the list closed, we heard the ringing of the bells and the blowing of a conch and saw a brahminy kite hovering over the house. The face of the astrologer beamed with a happy smile, and he remarked that money was not spent in vain. I was only a passive participator in the function. But, the Pazhur Kaniyan made me a firm believer in the science and art of astrology. Today I feel convinced that the science and art are all right, but

it is the quacks who spoil the name of both. Professor Rajaraja Varma was an adept in both and assured me that my opinion was quite correct. I have found the predictions recorded in the horoscopes of my wife and of myself turning out to be true. Many honest, decent men have told me of their experiences that would go to fortify my position. Why should then disbelieve astrology? But, as it is no business of mine to offend or defend astrology, I shall return to my narrative.

After the death of my eldest brother, my mother, the other brother and Karanavan Narayana Menon wanted me to look after the affairs of the family. Of course, I obeyed them, especially as I could always count on my mother's advice and her blessing. When I took it up, I got only a few registered and many unregistered leases, and an old, dilapidated account-book. Not a grain of paddy, not a pie came with them. That never daunted me. I set to work with a will. Because Mr. Machur Sankara Menon was a capable man and, if left out, he would be a thorn on my side, I solicited his advice and help, which he cheerfully placed at my disposal. To start with, we both visited every item of property in and near Ernakulam, and got registered leases executed from the tenants. When we started to Vellangallur, mother asked me to spend all the Onam days with her and then to go there. But she permitted me to proceed with my work on informing her that my court work would stand in my way after the recess, and also I might not then secure the assistance of my friend Vaki Narayana Pillai of Irinjalakuday. I liked my stay in that lovely village Vellangallur. Its seclusion carried balm to the weary and the worried. Its fields of corn glistened in silver sunshine and abounded in golden memories. I was thus able to convert an arduous task into a joyous adventure. With the soothing words of

advice of Narayana Pillai and the strong expressions of Sankara Menon, all the tenants fell into order and we got through the work in an incredibly short time. We had a strenuous time there, but the pleasures far outweighed the discomforts, many-fold, I should say. There was, above all, the proud and glorious feeling that I was doing my duty to my dear family.

After that, Sankara Menon and myself prepared an estimate of the yearly income and expenses of the family. The items of expenditure we put on a liberal scale which even included the gradual formation of a reading room and library for the use of the ladies. By this time, my mother was gone; and so I placed all matters before my eldest sister. With her full leave, I requested Sankara Menon to see for a month or two by actual experience, if the monthly budget for domestic wants truly tallied with the actual facts. This diplomatic move of mine my eldest sister applauded. Then we wanted her to take up that part of the work. He started the work.

It was at this juncture that the elder sister came and stayed in the house for a few days. She came with a purpose. She knew that my strict, constitutional procedure would defeat the scheme planned by her husband and herself. Briefly said, they wanted the management of the Tarwad and the Tavazhi properties in their hands. With that ultimate object in view, she began to poison the credulous, unsuspecting mind of the eldest sister. So as to worm herself into her favour and to begot trust in her, she had even brought golden trinkets for her grandchildren. It seems that the main charge against me was that I was entirely in the hands of Machur Sankara Menon who was misusing the family funds! Both were absolutely false. And, as for family funds, may it be said here, that, for paying off debts raised by my

eldest brother and those contracted for the funeral ceremonies of his and of mother, and even to meet the daily expenses of the family, I had to use my own money, and to borrow even, on one occasion! Yet the eldest sister succumbed to the artifices of her astute sister. My youngest sister gave me a hint of what was going on in the house and of the constant secret talks of the other two sisters. Complaints, mean and many, began to reach me from the eldest sister. She never gave me an opportunity to have a straight talk with her. These ignoble ways began to affect my health appreciably.

A letter I got about this time from Raja Vasudeva Raja, and the reply I sent him will further explain matters.

Palghat, 26-10-35.

My dear T. K. Menon,

The Peishcar and his wife and others are here. If you come here by Sunday mail I shall be glad. I wish to talk to you on some important business. . . . You may return from here by Monday night's train, so that you will lose only one working day. The rest in person.

Yours sincerely,
Sd. Vasudeva Raja of
Kollengode.

Ernakulam,
Saturday 28th October.

My dear Sir,

I got your letter of the 26th. On Monday, I am to appear in a case in the Cochin Munsiff's Court, in which Mr. Gover appears on the other side. Each side has summoned a great number of witnesses.

I would still have seized this opportunity to come over there, in spite of bad health, to try, as I have all along been trying, at first, directly and, then, through

Mr. K. Rama Menon and Mr. K. P. Padmanabha Menon to come to some settlement on affairs which have been dragging on their unholy length along.

But the Munsiff has taken a day's leave and is gone to Irinjalakuday, while Mr. Gover is absent at Trivandrum, so that it is not possible to personally represent matters and take a day's leave of absence.

I assure you that, after all, my presence is unnecessary, as I am agreeable to all the terms you may fix upon. Or, let them state what they want me to do.

The fact is, there has been a good deal of misrepresentation and insinuation by interested parties. They say that I am a puppet in the hands of Mr. Machur Sankara Menon and that Mr. P. Gopala Menon and myself are colluding to defeat my sisters. Though these hard falsehoods have affected my health, I have always tried to keep my temper unruffled. The moment these selfish illusions are dissolved, there will be peace in the house.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. T. K. Krishna Menon.

Mr. Kandanchathappilli Kunjan Menon conveyed, so I came to know afterwards, all this information to Mr. Kozhikkote Krishna Menon. So, one night while I was as usual returning from the temple, I saw Mr. Krishna Menon standing at his gate with a lantern in his hand. When I neared him, he said, "I am waiting for you. Come in. I want to talk to you for a couple of minutes." "If it is about my family affairs, I shall come tomorrow morning. For, otherwise, I may not get sleep at night." So I told him. "It is to get that for you, and plenty of it too that I want to speak to you. So, come on, like a good boy." I followed him. When we were seated, he thus began, "You know my wife has been practically off her senses for the past six or seven months. Have you ever seen me behaving like a coward? When you rule a house, you

have to rely on an wooden pestle or a strong broomstick. You are incapable of using either. Hence give up your management at once. Otherwise, I shall have to ask Marar to advise you to adopt that course. Good night, Aniyar." I thanked him for his timely advice. Next morning, Mr. K.P. Padmanabha Menon also sent for me at an early hour and told me that the elder sister was out to create trouble, and that I would do well to wash my hands off all family affairs. "You are too young and too noble to cope with Peishcar's tactics. So, you better follow the advice of your elders.", so my youngest sister said. Without losing a minute, I put all the papers I had and the account-book in a box, and went with it to my house. The conspiring sisters were seated together. I placed the box and its key between them, told the eldest one that she might manage all the family affairs, and turned my back on them and came away. Not a word either uttered. By this, their frustration of a noble object, I never suffered any misery. But they inflicted a heavy blow on the family. They did me one service. They made me early realise the sting of life. The tragic brevity of its joy they were to know in due time.

"The sword of heaven is not in haste to smite;
Nor yet doth linger."

The eldest son of my elder sister, a medical student, was nominally installed as the karanavan, but actually the affairs were in the hands of the elder sister. She raised a loan on the Vellangallur property, and transferred the lease to her name of a land or two that belonged to our mother. She did not stop there; for, love of lucre increases the more it is satisfied. Long after, I came to know of these.

When my elder brother was with me in his closing days, one morning, he called me to his side, and having said, "I gladly give you these. You may give

Rs. 3000 to Ammu after my death." he handed over to me a bundle of deeds which, a day or two before, he got down from Trichur by sending Thathampilli for that end alone. I began to cry. Then he said, "Don't behave like a fool. Send for Rama Menon." To Mr. K. Rama Menon also he said much the same thing, but also added that a document might be executed to evidence the gift as, otherwise, Mr. Narayana Menon Peishcar might create difficulties. The draft and its faired copy were ready, but it could not be signed and registered because my brother suddenly collapsed and died.

A few months after the death of my brother, Mr. Palliyil Gopala Menon taunted me by remarking that I had not given to my brother's wife what he wanted me to give her as, perhaps, I wanted all to myself. That remark, I thought, was mean; it was cruel; and he knew it. I told him I was only waiting to see the strategic moves of his friend Peishcar so as not to make my sister-in-law a victim of his machinations. For that, he said, it was better that I did my duty during the life-time of friends like him. On consulting my master and Mr. Padmanabha Menon, I sold a property to a Christian gentleman who paid my sister-in-law its sale-price of Rs. 3000.

A suit was launched by the elder sister, of course in conjunction with the eldest one, to set aside the sale on the grounds that the property did not belong to my elder brother and that his oral gift to me was not valid. It was numbered as Original Suit number 51 of 1081 of the Trichur District Court. The suit was tried by Mr. T. S. Narayana Iyer, M. A., B. L., who subsequently became the first judge of the Chief Court and the Diwan of Cochin. He found the contentions of the two plaintiffs untenable and dismissed the suit. He wrote a strong, elaborate judgment refuting the arguments of the plaintiffs.

The Plaintiffs appealed. That appeal suit, number 102 of 1982, was heard by Mr. V. K. Kelu Eradi and Mr. S. Doraswami Iyer and Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon, B.A., B.L. Even before it came up for hearing, partisans of the appellants were giving out that the appeal would be allowed. And so it was. But Mr. Kochunni Menon dissented from the other two, dismissed the appeal and confirmed the decree of the lower court. I never cared to heed to the rumours that were afloat then nor deigned to repeat them. But one thing I can say without the shade of a shadow of doubt, that it is a relief to read the judgments of Mr. Nanyam Iyer and Mr. Kochunni Menon both Bachelors of Law after reading the laboured pronouncements of the imported sub-judges, who were not B.Ls., and who had to wrestle hard to get over the evidence of Mr. Hanna Menon, B.A., B.L., B.C.L., (Bar-at-law, who became the Chief Justice of the High Court of Travancore.)

I was convinced that, legally and morally, the gift was sound, and that the properties gifted were the private acquisitions of my elder brother. So I did what I was directed to do by my brother.

I never worried over the result. The evening on which judgment was pronounced, Mr. G. V. Subramanya Iyer came to console me. But I had to console him. "I thank you for your concern over my welfare. But why this sadness over it? My brother has given me a good education and has also started me in my business. I will get on, G. V.; please do not worry over me. There is God and justice on my side." Though, as a rule, I rarely go to a theatre, that night he and I went to see a drama.

During the whole course of the litigation, strange as it might sound, Mr. Gopala Menon never gave me any help, never asked me a word about the case! He is a man of moods. He liked me; he also knew that I had a great regard for him. I never failed to sound

a warning note when I found that his impetuous mood would land him on unpleasant consequences to himself.

"My dear Cochaniyan," so he wrote in a letter of 8th November '99, "your letter will be treasured up by me as containing the views regarding my humble self of one to whom I always gave credit for saying unpleasant things when required. The opinion of such an one cannot be slighted by me, especially considering the occasion you have chosen to intimate it to me. My best thanks to you for doing the same."

Yet from another letter of the next year, "Your sincere anxiety having undoubtedly prompted you to pen it, I must not fail to drop a line at once (he was busy reading the records in a case with another) in reply and thank you heartily for your well-meant advice. I shall try my best to benefit by it. But at the same time I should tell you that this is not the first time I am the victim of misunderstanding."

Once he got a note, executed to him by my eldest brother for a loan for the construction of the upstairs building, renewed by me. At first, he asked for a mortgage, which I refused to write unless it was done jointly with the rest. He distinctly assured me that he would never seek any personal relief. Disregarding that promise, he, in a whiff of irritation, even prepared and signed a plaint and vakkalath and intimated the fact to me through his clerk. That was on 16-4-1908. I informed Mr. Kozhikkote Krishna Menon of it. He sent word to say that he would appear for me, and, at the same time, went and roundly abused his brother-in-law, Gopala Menon, for his unfriendly behaviour towards me. So he had to destroy the plaint. I paid him his debt soon after.

So, his conduct did not surprise me as much as it shocked others.

The plaintiffs did not enjoy the fruits of the ill-gotten glory. Two of the daughters, the eldest and the youngest, of the elder sister died. The eldest was the wife of the Raja of Kollengode, and the other the brightest of the lot and a student that gave promise of a brilliant career. Both were exceptionally good-natured. I liked them in spite of their parents, and they fully reciprocated my love to them. I mourned over their death. The evil continued. Peishcar practically lost his sight; and the lady herself lost her life, on 5-5-1916, away from her children, as the result of an operation. On 13-5-1916, I went to pay a condolence visit to Peishcar and his children at Trichur. As I took leave of him, he said, "Forget and forgive, Aniyar". When thus God delivered him into my hands, I felt a wave of inspiration pass over me. I turned round and, facing him, spoke these words: "God is great. He will protect the good and punish the guilty. And He cannot be won over by favour or recommendation." That went home. I did not stand a second more in his presence.

The fate of the eldest sister was no less tragic. As far as my memory goes, she was a widow, and my elder brother was liberally helping her in meeting all her wants. As my youngest sister said, even if my brother had left no word, still his brother and sisters should gladly make some provision for his wife and eight children. Before the suit was filed, she, the eldest sister, had with her about Rs. 1500 in ready cash. I advised her to invest it in some landed property in the name of her daughter and herself. Against that advice, she gave it to Peishcar for 'safe custody'. When she asked for it, Peishcar told her that all but Rs. 650 was used for the conduct of the litigation! One day, I was returning after my work in the Trichur District Court, to the railway station. Then I saw her getting into a bullock cart, also on her way to the station to take train to Ernakulam.

Her face was swollen and her eyes tearful. She was taking back her Rs. 650! The irony of fate — that I should be made to witness that sight! This Rs. 1500 was given her by the eldest brother. She also lost through her carelessness the Rs. 1000 I had given her in a lump sum.

After I began to practise my profession, I used to send her a small sum every month for her expenses. This I stopped when the plaint was filed, and renewed it only after the final judgment was delivered. This I told her I did, lest her companion sister might complain that I was bribing her to stray at times into truth. This was not all. Other occasions arose which must have made her painfully realise the poignancy of her position.

She sent her grandson Ramankutty to me for help to enable him to study for his B. A. degree. I said I would gladly give him, but he must go and tell my eldest sister that she might seek the assistance and advice of her patroness, by which of course I meant the elder sister. From her she got not a pie.

Similarly, for the Kettukalyanam of her grandchildren, she sought my help. I told her that I was against that practice, but, to please her, I would put the house and its front in a neat condition. That I did at a cost of Rs. 200.

On the completion of her 60th year, 29-5-1915, I told her that, provided she would permit me to meet the whole cost, I would see that the religious ceremonies and feast are conducted in a befitting fashion. The small contributions she might get from others, she must keep apart, and use only on another day. That was what I was particular about. She agreed, and I carried out to her entire satisfaction my part of the promise. When I went to her, at about 4 in the evening, after the feeding of the poor was finished, she profusely blessed me. I was on my legs from

the previous evening, and was also starving. To a pressing invitation to stay for meals, or at least to take a cup of milk, I said I would break my fast only after my worship in the temple. I came away at once to Kumaralayam to take a bit of needed rest.

Again, when, in 1929 September, my nephew Narayana Menon and his mother were about to start to Benares, my eldest sister expressed a desire to go with them on that pilgrimage. I gave her the money necessary for the travelling expenses and for the performance of the ceremonies at Benares and at Gaya. Thus, I had the satisfaction of returning good for evil to one whom I always revered as a mother.

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XVII MY DAYS AS A PILGRIM

Has anyone thought over the matter? — There is a magic in the names of India. Kashi, Ganga, Himavan, Ramesvaram, Vrindavanam, Kanyakumari, ring poetically in our ears with impulses of mild adventures. There is also the fascination of a spiritual atmosphere that clings round these places. Sages have made them sacred by their presence and penance in and about them. These give us the necessary upward push in our spiritual journey. The temples are not merely places of worship. "They are active community centres", and serve as assembly halls, dispensaries, art institutions and centres of trade. Temples have encouraged fine arts as no other institution has done or can do. Many of them were famous seats of learning. The melas or religious fairs acted as centres of trade and commerce.

A pilgrimage, unless it is properly planned and leisurely performed, is, no doubt, an arduous adventure. But, in any case, it will have its advantages.

It has exerted an abiding influence in the national and religious life of India. It is an education in itself. It has contributed to the catholicity of Hinduism, to its extraordinary toleration. It will give any one a lively sense of the glory and the grandeur, the solidarity and the fundamental unity of the Indian Empire.

I had a *Dha-pradakshinam* of India, a pilgrimage from Cape Comorin as far as Hrishikesh, from there to Puri and thence returned homeward. My wife had it before me, with her mother, brother and sister Srimathi Narayani Amma, the well-known lady musician. So I went alone with Raman, a very godly minded servant of mine. I went about in a leisurely fashion; stayed for some time in places I liked, while, from crowded, dirty places where I had no friends too, I took leave after the minimum time required for worship or sight-seeing.

In most of the places I visited, I had friends, who had been my guests as well at Kunnarakulam. So they kindly took charge of me and made my stay with them interesting, instructive and comfortable. They saved me from the irritating attentions of Pandas, priests, and militant beggars. My servant was given a purse of small coppers and coins from which he was to give to those who really deserved any charity at my hands.

My ignorance of Hindi did not in the least affect the even tenor of my trip. Why should people make a fetish of Hindi I thought. In Great Britain, there prevail different languages and various dialects. These have not stood as obstacles in the path of political progress. Why should they do in India alone? Even as it is, a student has to learn his vernacular, Sanskrit and English. It is neither practical wisdom nor sensible patriotism to oust one of these in favour of Hindi. I admire the clannish spirit of the Maharattas and of the Bengalis which made them stand for

their respective vernaculars, and pity some of the educated Malayalis who seemed to favour an anglo-vernacular mixture. This by the way.

I enjoyed my *Sethu-snanam* much. It had an exhilarating effect on me; so too my bath in the icy-cold, swift-flowing waters of the Ganges at Haridwar. In fact, these two places alone I wish to re-visit, if I get a chance. As for temples, I will solidly give my vote in favour of the temples in Kerala. They form a class apart by themselves, for neatness and a pure, spiritual air. I had my round of South-Indian temples first. Among them I liked those in Madura, Chidambaram, Perur, Conjiveram, Tirupathi and Tiruchendur. The magnificence of the Meenakshi temple of Madura and the sombre dignity of the Nataraja temple of Chidambaram are so conspicuous that no worshipper could fail to notice them. The prospect one gets from the top of the hill on which the Sri Venkateswara temple stands is superb. The Indian Ocean, whose waves lave the premises of the Tiruchendur temple, adds grandeur to it. Tirupathi is one of the richest temples in these parts, and it is to be congratulated on its diverting a part of its funds for the encouragement of Sanskrit studies. The Perur shrine, with its old, shady trees and the sacred Bhavani stream by its side has got a sylvan look about it. The location of the temples dedicated to Sri Subramanya at Pazhani and Tiruchendur has contributed not a little to the celebrity they have won in these parts. But sad to say, the difficulty a devotee experiences in worshipping at Pazhani and the commercial element that is by him noticed in the mode of making the offerings there and in some other famous temples cannot but give him painful shocks. I had a surprising experience at Madura. While hundreds of devout Hindus were worshipping the Goddess at the offering of the lights at twilight time, I saw an American tourist in our midst with her

kodak to take an instantaneous picture of the deity. There were similar incidents in my north Indian tour. But I regarded them all as the expressions of the tendency of modern times, and so pacified my disturbed mind.

To North India I started on 12-2-1936, and returned to Ernakulam on 24-4-1936. My wife feared to see in me a half-famished, emaciated person; but, thanks to the kindness of my friends and the care I took in my travels, I had actually gained a dozen pounds. I exercised myself regularly; I halted for my bath and my midday substantial meal. At night, I was satisfied with a light course of milk and fruits. I invariably travelled in the intermediate compartment which afforded me facilities for sleep. Only in rare instances, had I to resort to second class compartments.

From Madras, I went to Pooné. On the way, I took in Pandarpur. For this, I had to change at Kurlavadi to a narrow-gauge train. There I had an accident while raising the window of a second class room. There was no light; it was 4 a.m. Fortunately, there was a railway inspector in it, who got a doctor and had my finger washed and dressed. Then alone he permitted the train to start. It was so kind of him. For a fortnight, I had to seek the assistance of a doctor to attend to the wound; after that, I managed it myself. The bandage I was able to dispense with only at Shoranur. Thus, it remained as a reminder to me that I was a pilgrim and was not one out on a pleasant trip of sight-seeing.

The temple Vithoba (Sri Krishna) at Pandarpur stands on the banks of the Chandrabhaga river. On every Ekadasi day, many go there for worship. Kanade, Tilak and Telang used to frequent it with bhajana parties. Ekanath, Tukaram, Kabir, Namdev and others have composed many songs in praise of Vithoba.

At Poona, Mr. G. Bhaskara Menon, a student of my son and now an advocate at Ernakulam, kindly received me at the station; and so I was with him. I tried my best not to interfere with his law studies; but he would not allow me to have any such precaution taken. I immensely enjoyed my stay there. I had to see and to learn a lot at Poona. The Maharrattas are brave. They hold Sivaji as their national hero. That goes without saying. They are patriots to boot. The young ladies, on their way to their colleges, with their saris and saffron mark, looked very much like their sisters in Kerala.

One day I casually mentioned to a great Maharratta gentleman that, except cycles, I rarely met other vehicles, and that Poona might be termed the cycle city. He said I was right in my observation. "We have no money for cars and broughams. What little we own, we have to spend on our useful institutions. Further, please look round: you will find many barren rocks. For our uplift we have to pedal up ourselves, senselessly. That fact a cycle always reminds us, you see." Look wherever you like, you will find outstanding instances of patriotism and of the true types of philanthropy. Servants of India Society, Sreemathi Nathibhai Indian Women's University, Nishkama-Karma Mathom, Maharastriya Mandal, Bharata Itihasa Sansodhaka Mandal, Bhandarkar's Oriental Institute, Ferguson and Patwardhan Colleges, the Institutes for the study of Commerce and of Economics — these and others will fully bear out my statement.

Prof. D. K. Karve, a great son of India who worked to establish the Hindu Widows' Home, Mahilalaya and the Indian Women's University took me over all the institutions with which he is connected. As we went our rounds, he briefly sketched to me their origin and growth and with what tireless efforts funds were raised to finance them. There are about

twenty institutions in different parts of the Bombay Presidency that work along the lines laid down by the Women's University. That is a unique achievement for which Prof. Karve deserved no small credit. He had me as a member of its Senate for a few years.

The Servants of Indian Society is a product of the fertile brain of the great Indian patriot and statesman, the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale. It was founded on the 12th of June 1905. It aims "to train national missionaries for the service of India and to promote, by all constitutional means, the interests of the Indian People". A member on admission has to take seven vows. "A fervent patriotism which rejoices at every opportunity of sacrifice for the motherland, a dauntless heart which refused to be turned back from its object by difficulty or danger, a deep faith in the purpose of Providence which nothing can shake — equipped with these, the worker must start on his mission and reverently seek the joy which comes of spending oneself in the service of one's country." It will take me long to give even a list of the fine achievements of this society. Mr. S. G. Vaze was kind enough to take me round the splendid library, the office and the premises of the society. He gave me a succinct account of it. He also said that I could have the free use of the library to which it was my good fortune to do a good turn out of my great regard to the memory of Gokhale.

As this society cared for politics, the Bhandarkar Institute stood for the study of Sanskrit and for carrying on research work in that literature. For its work it has gained an international reputation.

The Maharashtra Mandal is started "to foster in the minds of the members a love for co-operative spirit, social service, sacrifice and discipline; to train person in the science and technique of all forms and kinds, western and eastern, of physical exercises, athletics, games and sports, and to establish a museum

of all instruments and weapons of offence and defence." It was my privilege to see some of the fine exercises performed in the academy and the remarkable physical development which they gave to the mandalists, and to realise for myself the national fitness and the spirit of chivalry which it emphasised. It looks also to the moral education of the members. Over the mandals and colleges, and the Film Theatre, my friend, Mr. V. G. Paranjpye, Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology dated as my guide. The other mandala is a research institute. It owns a unique collection of valuable manuscript records, deeds, rare illuminated written books, and precious paintings hardly surpassed both in quality and quantity by any other public collection in that presidency. The word unique is a much abused word by its being applied in inappropriate places. But here it fits in nicely. The late Dr. J. E. Abbot of New Jersey, America, was so struck with the extraordinary nature of the collection of things of priceless value by the mandala that, in 1931, he left by his will 30,000 dollars for constructing a suitable building to house them.

All the institutions are run by registered societies. The Ferguson College is more or less run by the members of the Servants of India Society. These have to work for 20 years, on a monthly salary of sixty rupees. Gokhale, Karve, Dr. Paranjpye, a senior wrangler, and many other distinguished persons were professors there. These could easily have got elsewhere any pay of four figures. The present Principal, Prof. Mahajani, is both a senior wrangler and Smith's prizeman. I asked him if he got time to do any research-work in his special subject. "My present research work consists in devising means to adjust the meagre income to the increasing expenditure." These are the true modern Karma Yogis of our sacred Aryavārtha. All honour to them. I worship their feet.

A nice pilgrimage, some may be tempted to say. But, on second thoughts, they would revise their opinion and regard great men and their noble activities also as appropriate objects for adoration. To those who are not likely to change their opinion, let me say that I have paid my devout obeisance to Sri Parvathi on the Parvathi Hill and to Sri Siva at Pashan. Poona and its vicinity is full of the reminiscences of the great Maharatta hero, Sivaji. He was a bhaktha and a disciple of Sri Ramdas. These two temples were frequented by him. To the former I went on an evening. The flight of steps tire you by the time you get to the top of the hill. But when once you reach there, the dry, pure breeze and the prospect around will cheer you and enliven you in an instant. From there you get a distant view of almost all the forts famed in Maharatta history. When you are in the temple of the mother Goddess whose spiritual presence supported Sivaji in his deadly encounters with the Moguls, you forget everything except Her Smiling Presence. Pashan I visited on the Sivarathri day. It is about 8 miles away from Poona. From 8 in the morning till late at night, an unbroken crowd of worshippers were wending their way thither. They may count a lakh or two, easily. The Sivalingam,—it is a *swayambhu*—is in an underground cave. The place was lighted, and a few purohits were seated round the deity, chanting Sri Rudra mantram. I was helped by the police to get in for darsan and to offer vilva leaves to the God. I felt glad I came out with none of my bones broken. Before I leave Poona, I must say one word about the Deccan Colony there. It is a self-contained colony with ideal roads and houses; a park, a play-ground, a hall and theatre are provided for social amenities; shops innumerable there are with a market and weekly fair. Facilities for education and general culture are also kept in view. The whole colony is entirely built upon a co-operative

basis by a registered society.

I did not like to live in Bombay. I took up my abode at Dadar, one of its suburbs, and on every evening, went by the electric train to Bombay to see the places of interest there.

Mr. S. Ramasubba Iyer and Mr. N. Mahadeva Iyer made my stay at Dadar and visits to Bombay comfortable and educative. Not only cultural institutions did I visit with the latter, but also places like the Javeri Bazaar and the Crawford Market. One evening was wholly devoted to the Malabar Hill, and another to a cruise in the Harbour.

From Bombay I went to Nasik and Panchavati. Mr. Joshi, the Municipal Engineer there, had previously been written to by Prof. Paranjpye, his father-in-law. Nasik is a fine health resort; so too Llanavola, where Swami Kuvalayananda runs his Institute for the development of physical and spiritual cultures according to the ancient yogic system. I spent some useful hours there. The religious side of Nasik and Panchavati was a disappointment to me. Probably because, as a humble student of Valmiki and Bhavabhuti, I had gone there with high expectations. Even the Godavari did not appeal to me, especially after I found stones being quarried from a part of its bed! But there they all lay, partly bereft of the glories sung in the *Ramayana* and the *Uttara-Ramacharita*, as mute illustrations of the vicissitudes wrought by Time.

From Nasik I went to Nagpur, instead of to Baroda. This detour was necessitated by my desire to be in Baroda when Sir V. T. Krishnra Chari was there. He kindly wrote to me that, though he would be absent at Delhi for four or five days, he had made every arrangement for my stay, at Baroda; but added that he would however like me to go Baroda when he happened to be in the station. It was well that I went

there after his return. For, on account of the birthday celebrations of His Highness the Gaikwar Maharaja, all the institutions had been closed; and, but for his extra-ordinary kindness, I would have had to leave Baroda without seeing anything of importance. I shall gratefully remember this his generous gesture to an old, humble friend of his. But I anticipate.

At Nagpur, I was the guest of my friend, Rao Bahadur R. V. Pillai, the Director of the Veterinary Department of the Central Provinces, who showed me all the important places. Ramtek, the Ramagiri of *Meghnadadese*, is about twenty miles from Nagpur. The Yaksha, the love-lorn hero of that poem, when he was deported from Alakapuri, lived there. During the period of their exile, Sita and Rama with Lakshmana also lived at that place. That is the tradition. Nagpur reminds one of the race of Nagas. I wish some one will write a book about them. They deserve it.

Hoshangabad was my next halting-place. I went there to have the ceremonial bath in the Narmada. It is a magnificent river, and the granite steps that lead down to it are strongly and attractively built. From where I bathed, I could clearly see Mount Girnar at a distance on the other side. Mentally I paid my worship at the feet of the Saint Dattatreya on its summit. I chanced to meet two near relatives of the late Diwan Thiruvengata Chari, one of whom was an I.C.S., and the other a District Civil Surgeon. I had to regretfully decline their kind invitation to prolong my stay there. At Bhopal, the Railway station master, Mr. E.F. D'Souza, was one who hailed from Tellicherry. He kindly took me round in a car, and showed me the palaces, parks, the lake, and the pavilion where the royal guests rest before and after they had their boating and yachting. Anyone who

might remain there for a while, would forget for a moment all worldly worries.

Next I went to Ujjayini. Ujjayini, Indore, Gwalior, Bhopal, Dhara, Mandu, Vidisa, Dasarna — these will come within the limits of Malwa. At one time, it was called Avanti. Mahishmati was its ancient capital, which was made famous by Muchukunda and Kṛthaviryarjuna. Ujjayini reached its zenith of celebrity during the time of its Paramara rulers.

The Narmada, the Yamuna, the Vetravathi, the Sipra, the Gambhira and the Charmanvati flow through that kingdom. We get charming pictures of these in Bhāsa's *Vasavadatta*, in the *Toy Cart* of Kālidasa and the *Olga Menon* of Kālidasa. It was with wonder, with becoming humility, and with heart-thrills, that I walked the streets of Ujjayini, rendered sacred by the footprints of Kālidasa. There is still about the city an antique appearance. The Mahakali-temple, the Annopurnaswari temple and the Mahakaleswara temple yet adorn the place with their hoary presence. If I let my self go, I shall certainly lose my way: for much, very much have I to say about these ancient cities that so frequently figure in the Sanskrit classical literature. However, let me at least say that, before I left Ujjayini I went and saw its far-famed observatory. Ujjayini was the first meridian of the Hindu geographers.

At Indore, I got down only to meet Mr. and Mrs. Egerton in whose pleasant and enlightened company I spent about four hours before I took train to Baroda. Indore is dear to the Indians as it was ruled by Vikramaditya, Bhoja, Yesodharma and the noble queen Ahalya Bai, and to the South Indians particularly because it was administered by Raja Madhava Rao and Sri Regunatha Rao. Indore has faced several and severe trials before it entered into its pleasant peaceful position.

In the *Panchatantra* there is a vivid description of Pataliputra. It applies to Baroda. As in Mysore, I found a spacious magnificence in the city. I visited every institution that is worthy of a visit; and I was much instructed by my visits. The agricultural farm, the Alembic Chemical Works, the Museum and the Zoo, the Chitrasala and the Kalabhavanam, the armoury and the priceless ornaments, the Central Library, the chariots of gold and silver, the Music Academy, the Makarpur and Lekshmivilasam palaces, the colleges and the Vittal Krida Bhavanam, and the Oriental Manuscripts Library — these claimed my special attention. The Sayajisarovar is about 12 miles away from the city. That is, I went and saw. More than listing these, it is not possible for me to go into details over them. That in a way I have attempted to do in my small book on my pilgrimage. That, in the first instance, I was forced by the editor of the *Deepam* to write as articles to the pages of his Malayalam daily. But for him, that book would never have come into being.

Though it may not be possible for me to describe these institutions here, I cannot but mention the fact that all these proclaimed that the knowledge and the experience gained by foreign travels, the great roller used in full measure for the benefit of his country. His forceful personality was visible everywhere. Money was of no consideration to him in the adoption of measures, even in the selection of officers, calculated to improve the welfare of his subjects. In his patriotic efforts, his able ministers were of immense assistance to him.

The Alembic Chemical works is a concern entirely due to the nature, ability and perseverance of Indians. H. H. the Maharaja Gaikwar appointed Prof. T. K. Gajjar, a clever scientist, as the Principal of his Kala Bhavan, that is the college of technology.

As an aid to the work he had to do there, his agile mind turned to practical industrial enterprise. A small factory for making basic spirit was started by him. That was the nucleus of the present famous company known as the Alembic Chemical works, the promotion and success of which is due to Profs. Gajjar, Kotibhasker and Mr. Raja Ratna Amin. "After achieving the perfect manufacture of rectified spirit, absolute alcohol, and spirituous and non-spirituous medicinal preparations, according to the standard of British Pharmacopoeia, the Company turned its attention to the production of Ayurvedic and proprietary medicines", many of which have found a ready market everywhere in India. The company receives the generous help and the liberal patronage of His Highness' Government.

From Baroda I went to Rajputana. There one must visit Ajmere, Jaipur, Udaipur, Chitor and Jodhpur. When you enter Ujjayani, you feel as if you are in a cultural centre; but, when you get into Rajputana, you realise you are in a battlefield. The echoes of the ancient wars are not yet silent; you scent battle in the air.

High hills surround Ajmere; and the famous fortress of Taragarh, that lies in its south-west, may well be called a second Gibraltar. Ana Sagar, an artificial lake, with its picturesque setting, and the marble platform built by Shah Jehan on one of its banks has a charm all its own. Akbar's Palace is now used as a museum. The Arhai-din-Kajhpora, a mosque said to have been built in two and a half days, is, in point of beauty, not inferior to the mosque of Altmash at Delhi. Ajmere contains the only workshop where a railway-engine can be built in its entirety by skilled Indian labour.

At Ajmere, I was the guest of my friend the late Prof. Seshadri who showed me his college, the Mayo College, intended for the sons of rulers and chiefs,

and every other place of interest, and arranged for my bath in the sacred lake of Pushkar, without which no pilgrimage is considered complete. Near it there is a temple to Brahma, the only one, I believe, in all India. Kalidasa has a humorous sloka that gives a reason for his scanty worship. There are also palaces of rulers on the banks of this romantic lake with bathing-ghats attached to them. Viswamitra had his tapas broken by Menaka somewhere near Pushkar.

When Prof. Sdshadri first met me at the railway station, he said he had a warrant for me. As an old lawyer I said I was familiar with the process, and so was not afraid of it. He laughed and said that Mr. C. G. Herbert was there and he had asked my friend not to let me leave Ajmere without seeing him. I had a full two hours' talk with Mr. Herbert, before I left Ajmere. We were happy to meet each other.

To the narrow, winding streets and the close, cluttered bazaars of Udaipur, the roads and market-places of Jaipur furnish a striking contrast. Here is seen the order and spaciousness of modern town-planning. A subtle charm is added to the place by the pink-stone used in most of the main buildings. Amber, about eight miles away from the new city, was the old capital. It guarded the passes of the east to the rich plains beyond. The palace and the fortress are ideally situated. The palace and its beautiful garden are kept in good order. The Hall of Victory is one that I was specially invited by the keeper to inspect. There the work of the sculptors, who seems to have thrown convention to the winds, has a freshness and charm which is inspiring. The view from the roof of the Zenana quarters is magnificent.

The Jaipur palace still possessed the warm glow of life as if it were used and lived in. In its grounds is the Palace of the Clouds where Jai Singh used to sit on

evenings to enjoy the air and to see the fountains play. I was shown a gigantic sword said to have been wielded by Raja Man Singh. The Hawa Mahal, the Hall of the Winds, is a fascinating nine-storied structure, done in pinkstone. The lightness of decoration and its delicacy give to the building an airy and audacious beauty. Of the arts and crafts of Jaipur you get an idea in the Albert Hall and Museum. But for the guidance and hospitality of Mr. Sivanath Singh Thakur and his brother, my visit to Jaipur would have been dull and barren. Their manager, Mr. Indra Pal Singh, made it welcome, fruitful and instructive to me. The dignified air of an ancient aristocracy hovers over their modern Malison House. To them I am indebted beyond the measure of my words.

Udaipur is not a very old city. Rajputs, after their last stand at Chitorgarh, cut across the arid desert and installed themselves in perpetual defiance at Udaipur. It may be called the capital of the greatest and most revered among the Rajput rulers. The sparkling waters of the Pichola Lake reflect the city and the palaces on its eastern bank. There are islands in the lake itself adorned with marble palaces. The Jag Mandir, among these, is certainly a worth visit. Jaisamand, the greatest artificial lake in the world, dotted with islands, lies forty miles away from the city. Another place of interest in the vicinity is the battlefield of Haldighati, rightly termed by the historians as the Thermopylae of India.

A visit to the fort of Chitor is verily a pilgrimage to any patriotic Indian. It stands out defiantly into the plain of Mewar as if still challenging its antagonists to come and taste the cheer that awaits them there. It epitomises Rajput history; in it lies buried the flower of Rajput chivalry. Its scarred walls bear witness to the tale of several sieges, to a heroism that might rightly be termed epic. The name Rana of Pratap that shines in the annals of

Rajaputana is inextricably linked with it. Padmini's palace and Mirabai's temple, an Indian could see only with tearful eyes.

It was to Agra that I went from Rajaputana. Prof. Seshadri advised me to go to the Agra Hotel, run by a Bengali gentleman. On the basis of my friend's letter, he treated me with consideration and placed at my entire disposal the services of intelligent guides who knew Agra intimately. Agra is redolent with the memory of Akbar and Shah Jehan. They have shed glory on it. The one represents consummate statecraft, the other every fine art.

"Sing of great Akbar's sway
Sing of Sivaji's day
Sing boldly Freedom's day
God save our India."

So sings Mrs. Besant. Akbar was fashioned by nature in one of those rare noble moulds. This is how his glory yet shines with an imperishable lustre. Through the unnatural conduct of his fanatic son, Shah Jehan had a sad end. So goes the world of Karma, of Kismet.

The Taj Mahal, the Agra Fort, Fatehpur Sikri and Akbar's tomb at Sikandra were the places that I visited while at Agra. The Taj is beyond description. Some have called it "Frozen Music", others have termed it "a poem in marble." Pages in prose and verse many others have devoted to pourtray its beauties. But to no purpose. No human tongue can praise it properly. It rebukes all human speech. To know it, to enjoy it, you must see it, not once but many times, not on days alone but in moonlight as well. Then you may get a hint, an echo of a note of that costly elegy of love which that great emperor Shah Jehan created for his Mumtaz Mahal, the Pearl of the world. It is an enchanting edifice. Even the holy Yemuna is silent, when it cleans the premises and flows majestically by.

The Agra Fort is a huge building in a semicircular shape. Though called a fort, it was at one time the residence of Akbar. Enclosing the fort there are two high walls which are further re-inforced by two wide and deep ditches. Of the four gates, only two are now in use. During the Mogul Period, boats used to go in and out of the fort through the water gate which at present stands closed. I was specially taken to see the Hall of Audience, the Palace of Mirrors, the Pearl Mosque, the Vineyard, the Palace of Jodha Bai, the fountain of rose-water, the Jasmine Tower.

More than 16 lakhs of rupees was spent by Shah Jehan on the Pearl Mosque. The Tower too was built by him in response to the wish of Nur Jehan. It is entirely built of marble. It is exquisitely inlaid with coloured stones. The carving and inlay is wonderful. The pavement in front contains an inlaid chess-board. By an irony of fate, it was in a small iron-barred room of this that, on the direction of his son Aurangazib, he spent his last years as a prisoner. His last wish was to see the Taj, the tomb of his most beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal. He died with his gaze intently fixed on it.

Except for the marble pavement and the flower-beds, the Vineyard is bare. In the middle of it, there is a refreshing tank for the use of the Begums. In the cubicles in the four corners of it, there is a pair of fountains.

Fatehpur Sikri is about 24 miles from Agra. Akbar lived and held his court there for a few years. There are several palaces and tombs there. It covers several acres of ground, and the whole place is enclosed by a wall 50 feet high and 6 feet broad. Even the roads and bazaar are paved with bricks, one of which the guide and myself found it difficult to lift up. There are palaces for his Hindu, Christian and

Mohammodan wives, built in appropriate styles. But the most artistic building that I saw there was the one that contained the tomb of Akbar's religious teacher, Sheikh Salim Chisti. People call it a shrine, and a shrine it looked. Before that and in front of Akbar's tomb at Sikandra, I prostrated in the orthodox Hindu fashion. There were several in the shrine, but only an old bearded Musulman and his fair daughter in the other place. From my simple dress and sandal-paste mark, they could easily make me out to be a Hindu. They began to question about me to my guide who told them that, though a Hindu, yet I knew the Bible and the Quran as well, and respected the greatness of all religions. I told them that I was a great admirer of the Prophet and of the great emperor Akbar. Some of them came and touched my feet, and all showed great kindness to me. The old guard at the emperor's tomb refused to take any present from me, while his lovely girl gave me a garland of flowers. The building at Sikandra has a distinctive beauty of its own. As in Akbar, there is a dignified, solid splendour about it. It is covered all over with artistically carved quotations from Quran and inscriptions in praise of Akbar.

To Mathura, Gokulam and Vrundavanam I went in the hope of finding arcadian surroundings there. So as to bring my mind in tune with the holy air of those places, I had the lines of some hymns on my lips.

Somehow, I like a village life; but, may be due to my bad stars, I have had to mainly pass my days in towns. There is much substance in the saying that God made the country, man made the town. But the motor vehicles are fast annihilating even that ennobling difference. In the long ago, people approached a village by slow degrees in a bullock cart or a Kevallam so that they could see it from far away and

discover its beauties, one by one. Now they burst upon it by train or car or a motor-boat.

We have no time to enjoy a smiling, hospitable village, with its shady trees and shining meadows where the very landscape would appear to be on a pilgrimage. An aimless walk over the rolling lanes that ramble round the village will drive all dull cares away and give you ample health and no small happiness. Am I straying? I am sorry. Let me hasten back to Mathura, Gokulam and Vrundavanam.

When I started to these places, the proprietor of the Agra Hotel asked his nephew to accompany me. That young man, he said, knew the places very well, as he was running a hotel in Mathura for about ten years. He also said with a smile, "You can fix the time of stay after you see the places." He was right. The places and some of the people there gave me a shock. My young companion adroitly gave out that I was a mantrikan from Malabar on my way to Irshikesh. That remark saved me from those who would have pestered me for pics. It also facilitated my trips to the three places and worship in various shrines.

The town is two miles from the station. The town wore an ancient look, with its narrow streets and many storeyed buildings; but, in the place where the palace of Kansa stood, there is a mosque. There was not much to be seen in the town. I had my bath in the Jumna and worship in the Dwankamath temple. Then I started to Gokulam, seven miles away to the south of Mathura. On the way, a dust-storm overtook us, and we had to stand near our jutka covered all over with our cloths. Gokulam had the sad appearance of a deserted village; but the remnants gave hints of its once prosperous condition. I was, no doubt, shown the spots rendered sacred by the sports of Krishna. Vrundavanam is five miles north of Muttra. There I went in the evening. A festival had gathered quite a crowd in one of the temples of which there

were four. Music, dance and harikatha performance were in full swing. Vrundavanam looked prosperous. The spots associated with Sri Krishna's early days were pointed out to me. The place where the Rasacrida was performed is one that is ideally situated for a folkdance. It is an open space on the banks of the Yemuna.

Rasacrida is a sportive dance between Sri Krishna and the Gopis. As Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar rightly puts it, "The Gopi episodes may best be regarded as symbolic of ideal devotion." This Rasacrida took place during the days of the childhood of Krishna at Vrundavanam. Krishna is said to have killed Kamsa in his 11th or 12th year. Rasacrida was performed before this, before he has had his thread-bearing ceremony and the education under Sandipani. If it were a lecherous dance, discreditable to the name and glory of Sri Krishna, would not Sisupala have included it as one of prominent items of abuse that he levelled at him? Again, would this incident have been in that case narrated in Puranas by ancient sages with gusto, and by a modern saint like Sri Narayana Bhatta in his *Narayaneeyam*. He even begins his *Peakriya-sarvasam* with this benedictory stanza.

രാസ വിഭാസ വിശേഷം
 ഭൃന്ദവന മതഃകണ്ഠനന്ദനം ദ്രവം
 പ്രകൃതിജന്മ പ്രത്യുജ്ജ്വൽ
 പ്രഭാകരം ശോഭിക്കാൻ സമ്പദ്വിതം

Always remember the beautiful figure of Lord Srikrishna, glorious in the Rasa dance, the figure that merges with each gopa wonam just as prathyaya merges with prakrithy.

At Delhi, I lived with Raja Vasudeva Raja of Kollengode. He asked me to have some rest. My relatives and friends made my stay there so pleasant that I was half inclined to obey the Raja's injunction. For ten days I was there. Then, during a short

temporary absence of the Raja, I cleared out, lest, on his return, he may force me to stop there further. I had still many places to do. But, before he left he took me to the assembly Hall to see the Council in work and also to one or two other places, and also arranged for my stay at Haridwar. Meenakshikutty and Govindankutty, his children by his first wife, who was my niece, were in Delhi. Meenakshi was with her husband Mr. K. K. Chettur, high up in the Imperial service, while Govindankutty, after a creditable collegiate career in India and in Europe, was resting on his oars, before he took up an appointment. Then there was my friend, Mr. K. P. S. Menon, I. C. S., who took me to see Firozabad, Emperor Humayun's tomb, the Kutub Minar, Delhi Fort, Masjid, and the Roshanara Gardens. With Govindankutty I had a round of old Delhi. As we went along, they explained to me many matters of historical interest.

Close upon the right bank of the Jumna lie the memorable ruins of a palace of the Pandavas commingled with the ruins of the fort of Firoz Shah. The old Fort is a reminiscence of the great Pandavas and of their capital Indraprastha. The place where it stands is still known by that name; even the settlement register, I am told, designated the locality by the name of Indarpat.

The tomb of Humayun was begun by his wife and completed by Akbar at a cost of 15 lakhs of rupees. The dome is done in marble. Below the dome, there are a number of rooms and pavilions. From the top, the view is fine and covers everything of interest in and round Delhi.

Kutub Minar is regarded as one of the wonders of the world. This beautiful column was begun as a tower of victory by Prithvi Raj. It is 238 feet high. The summit is reached by several stone steps.

From the top of this as well one gets a magnificent view of Delhi. The Iron Pillar near it is also an old Hindu relic. Nadir Shah tried by all means to have it taken out. Finding the pillar too firm, a cannon was resorted to; but it produced only a small depression on its surface which is still pointed out to the visitors. Very near Kutub Minar, there is a temple dedicated to Yogamaya, the sister of Sri Krishna.

In the Fort, what attracted my attention most was a slab of white marble which was a sheet of pictures of birds, flowers and fruits. I was told that it was the work of a favourite artist of Shah Jehan. The hand of this great emperor had done much to beautify Delhi. The private Audience Hall in the fort is supposed to be one of the most highly ornamental of all Shah Jehan's buildings. Over the entrance to it you find the scales of justice, and round the roof the famous inscription, "If there is a heaven on earth, it is this, it is this, it is this." It was in this hall that the famous Peacock Throne was kept.

The Jumma Masjid is considered to be one of the longest, if not the largest mosque in the world. It is doubtless one of colossal proportions. This is described as the metropolitan mosque of Moslems in India.

The beautiful lay out of the Roshanara Garden is ascribed to Roshanara Begum, a daughter of Shah Jehan, who was an adherent of Aurangazib. But there is no need for that to detain us. We shall proceed.

The timings of the train from Delhi to Kurukshetra are so arranged as to enable a visitor to go there and return the same day. The battlefield and the place from where the Gatha was given out will be pointed to you. When you are in Kurukshetra

and in Naimisaranya, you will at first rejoice over your visit to these places; but the reaction will soon set in and you become sad over the deplorable condition in which they now are. But that will not be so at Haridwar and Hrshikesh. There you really gain an exhilarating experience which will last all your life.

I took the night train to Haridwar, where I reached at about 7 in the morning. That is the place where the Ganges enters the plains through its gorge in the mountains. The scenes in the morning that I witnessed from the train I can never forget. The green meadows with grazing cattle, the wavy fields of corn were no doubt refreshing to the eye. But it was the distant yet near Himalays that I could distinctly see that claimed all my attention. "Austere in its snowy purity, terrible in its majestic remoteness in its unsealed precipices and untrodden peaks it stood against the sky." "The blue sky, tinged with colours, served as a back-ground to the fretted tires of frozen summits which shone resplendent and kept their daily tryst with the flaming bringer of light." The rosy light of the early day fell on the snowy tops, and lit them with a radiance that seemed divine. The dawn seemed brief, but it was beautiful. It came from the back of the peaks as if by a sudden inspiration. I stood up and adored with closed hands the father of Sri Parvathi.

I stayed in the Madras Mutt where Swami Madhava Tirthar, a friend of the Raja of Kollengode, blessed me with both his hands and said that the place was mine so long as I stayed there. He talked Malayalam. I found him to be a Sanskrit scholar. He had his own flight of steps to the Ganges and his own private shrine. I found it difficult to negotiate the first plunge in icy-cold water. After that, — Oh! how refreshing, how enervating! The current was

strong, but, at the depth of several feet, you can see even small pebbles under that crystal clear water. In the morning, I had my worship in the shrine of the Mutt. I got beautiful, boiling milk, hot puries and fresh oranges and apples from the bazaar. After a light breakfast, I started, as advised by Swamiji, to Hrishikesh in his car, accompanied by a scholarly sanyasi disciple of his. On the way, I had to get down to worship in certain wayside shrines. One such I distinctly remember. It is called Satyanarayanam. It is a small temple housing a nice image with a charming smile. From either side of the frontal platform, steps go down to two small tanks into which tiny channels bring fresh water which, from the tanks rushed through down their outlets. Before I reached my destination, I had to bathe in the Triveni, adore the deities in the Reghunath-Bharathamandirams, and the Sadhus in the premises of the Kalahambili temple. Some that I found there I could not but really meet obeisance pay. Their looks were arresting, sublime. The glint of far horizons was in their eyes. In their presence, "the current of thought is changed, as if by magic, from mean to sublime things, from the gross to the spiritual, from the trivial to the enduring." Some others, of course, there were among these saints who were, no doubt, supreme artists in this form of amiable imposture. Why? To earn a living without any labour. I enquired at the office of the Kambiliwallah if they could arrange for me a trip to Badarinarayanam. I was informed that at that time the temple would be closed. At Hrishikesh, I had my snanam at the Lekshtnanajula. Near that place, my sanyasi guide took me to two small parvasalas, in each of which a Malayali was performing tapas. Blessed young men!

I returned to Haridwar; and after refreshing myself, set out again to see the Gurnukulam at Kangri. It was started in 1902 by Swami Sradhanada; it has

now assumed the lofty status of a real University. The life and discipline of a Gurukulam is strictly kept up. Each Brahmachari has to reside there at least for 14 years. The course covers literature, science, philosophy, economics; vedas and vedangas. The college of medicine attached to this teaches Ayurveda along with allopathy. The instruction is imparted in Hindu. The institution owns in one block several acres of ground. I was shown over the Gurukulam buildings, the hospital, the medical stores. As I have given a small sum, the interest of which is to be used to award a prize every year for religious studies, some of the staff and students escorted me all round the place. The yearly expenditure is about Rs. 1,60,000. Then I went to worship in Daksheshvaram, Vilvakeshvaram and Brahmakundaram temples. Finally, I came to the banks of the Ganges where there is a fine temple fittingly dedicated to Gangadevi. At the time of the offering of the lights to the Devi at the start of night, all who are present are expected to float on the waters small vessels of clay with a little oil and a lighted wick. It is a lovely sight; you seem to be in a fairy-land. In front of the temple, there is a spacious platform done in concrete, where people remain till late in the night; some even sleep there. Till 5 to 8 O'clock at night, there will be religious lectures, reading of puranas, Harikatha performance, and shops for the sale of sweets or articles of other sorts, in different parts of the platform. Some will form small groups to while away their time in idle talk in the cool, soft breeze wafted from the waters of the holy Ganges. I rested there for a few hours before I took train to Dehra Dhun.

To Dehra Dhun I went to see a relative and friend of mine, Mr. C. P. Sivarama Menon, who is working in the Dhoon School. This school is run after the fashion of the famous schools in England. It is intended for the boys of the wealthy class of

people. Mr. Menon is a brilliant product of the English University and has written an excellent work on *Early astronomy and Cosmology*. I spent a day with him, went over the school, and round the place, and returned to Delhi. I had an attack of severe fever that gave me trouble for two days. The heat and dust between Haridwar and Hrishikesh, must have brought this on me. Before I had it, two or three gentlemen came to me to ask me to join a deputation and to read the address to be presented to His Highness the Maharaja of Travancor: who was there then, on behalf of the Malayali residents in Delhi. As my excuses, valid to my mind, were not accepted by them, I had to accede to their wish. But, as ill luck would have it, on the appointed day, I was bed-ridden with a temperature of 100°. They left me alone; but, after the function, Mr. K. P. S. Menon came to me and told me all about it. I paid my respects to their Highnesses the Maharaja and the Maharani before I left Delhi for Lucknow.

At Lucknow, I was fortunate to spend two days with my friends Mr. and Mrs. Nandan Menon. Mr. V. K. Nandan Menon is a Professor of the Lucknow University, while his wife, Srinathi Lakshminikutty Amma, M. A., L. L. B., a daughter of my college friend, Mr. Rana Varma Thampian, is one who has visited Britain, Europe and Russia. Lucknow stands on the Gomti made holy by its passage through Naimisaranya, the modern Nimsar. It was from there that the sages Soumaka and others heard the narrations of the story of *Mahabharatam*. Even in its present deplorable condition, you seem to hear the echo of that recitation and to feel something of the presence of holy persons.

There was an All-India Swadesi Exhibition at Lucknow when I went there. One night, after supper, my friends took me to see it. We went round the various stalls; but only the large shed, entirely given

up to Soya bean, now remains in my memory. Large posters proclaimed its virtues while small ones dealt with its cultivation and the preparation of the several articles of food to which it can be converted.

Kipling calls Lucknow the most beautiful city in India, next to Bombay. He says that kings drenched it in blood and filled it with palaces. There is no doubt a setting of tragedy about its picturesque beauty adds something to its charm. Lucknow, popularly known as the city of gardens and palaces, was, so the tradition goes, ruled by Lakshmana, Sri Rama's brother. His fort is pointed out on a raised ground, still known as Lakshmana Tila. After it passed out of the hands of the Hindu rulers, Lucknow was governed by the Nawabs of Oudh, the most famous one among them being Asaf-ud-daulah. In writing of him Mr. Twining, an Indian civilian, remarks, "In polished and agreeable manners, in public magnificence and private generosity, he might well be compared with the most splendid sovereigns of Europe." It was under the rule of these Nabobs that Oudh and its capital Lucknow became famous for its beauty and splendour and rose as a centre of art and learning. My eyes met in the city several good roads, shaded by avenue trees, nice gardens and fine, solid historic buildings. I was first taken to the old residency, whose walls were riddled with shots, in a spacious underground room of which the Europeans in the station saved themselves during the dark days of the famous Sepoy Mutiny.

This is not a guide-book. So I shall not list with a matter-of-fact accuracy all the places I have visited. Not even the Chattri-Manzil palaces are going to detain me, those wonderful buildings so called after the copper gilt umbrellas that surmount them. But of two places, I must say a few words. They are the great Imambara and the La Martinere educational institutions for boys and girls. The

Imambra, the mausoleum of Nawab Asaf-ud-daulah, was begun by that humane prince himself as a relief measure to combat the terrible famine of 1784. It is a splendid piece of architecture. The main room is by repute the largest vaulted hall in the world. In front of the building are two large well-kept lawns, one above the other, and both steep ascents are reached by flights of steps. The structure contains a mosque flanked by two marble minarets from the top of which you get a magnificent view of the surrounding country. Major General Claude Martin, from whom the educational institutions take their name, was a native of Lyons. As a soldier in a French regiment he came out to India. When the English captured him as a prisoner, he secured a commission in the service of the East India Company, and rose to the rank of a major. Subsequently, we find him as a confidential advisor of Nawab Asaf-ud-daulah with the rank of a Major General. He died in 1800. These vicissitudes in his life did not prevent him from amassing an enormous amount of wealth with which he established educational institutions in Lyons, Lucknow and Calcutta.

To Mr. Nandan Menon came a young friend of his, Mr. M. G. Rehman, B.A., who owns the Kitabistan of Allahabad. He belongs to an ancient, aristocratic family. He generously remarked, when he came to know the programme of my itinerary, that he would easily arrange for me everything, at Allahabad and Prayag. So he did. His father had captivating courtly manners, and welcomed me with infinite cordiality. When I was starting to Prayag in his car, he said, "I should have sent my son with you. But, then the orthodox set will look askance at you. The driver has full instructions. Only give 8 annas to the boatman, and another 8 annas to your priest, though each may demand Ra. 5." It all took place as he had foretold. I sat firm in the car. The driver had

brought all the necessary articles for the ceremonial offerings on our way. I said to the boatman that I belonged to Malabar and would swim to the place for my ceremonial bath, and to the priest that I myself knew how to perform the rites without his help. When they found that I refused to be regimented by them, they relented and came to my terms. The troubles did not end there. When I went to the spot where I was to get down and bathe, I found the place full of mud, and my boat surrounded by other boats with pseudo-sanyasis and honest beggars. As I had not gone there with any money to be given away as alms, I told them to meet me where I lived. After my snanam and meals, I went with my young friend to see Ananda Bhavan, Armoury, Museum and the university. I paid my respects to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. Finally, I came to Kitabistan where Mr. Rehman treated me to tea and other refreshments. I then took train to Benares which I reached by 8 at night.

There Sri Krishnaji was waiting for me with a coach and four! Sri Krishnaji had come to my place at Ernakulam. With him I had sent a long beautiful malkon cane for his aged father, Sri Ramkumarji. His father came out to receive me at his door. He then told his son to look after me as if I was Ramkumarji himself. Else, brandishing that stick, he said with a smile, "this would be on your back." To be grateful, let me at once say that Krishnaji behaved to me in a spirit of filial reverence. The place allotted to me was on the banks of the river, so that I could always see and worship the mother Ganges. The rule is that a devout Hindu must stay in Kas, for ten nights. On the first night, Krishnaji and myself had a very long talk. Just as he got up to retire, I plainly told him that I cared more for intense faith and mental devotion than for the observance of formal rites. However, I was prepared to

spend a small sum for these. He entirely fell in with my views, and promised that everything would be done with that money in the usual prescribed order, in Benares and Gaya. Those words of his relieved my mind of a heavy burden, and I really felt at ease.

There is something charming, something alluring about Benares. It attracts you. It has attracted many great men in the past. Budha went to Kasi to spread his religion. Sankara, Chaitanya, and many others were there. Tulasidas wrote his Ramayana from there. Even Kabir, that prophet of the Hindu-Muslim amity, went there. There is something inviting about it. I have no doubt about it. Is it the Ganga that majestically flows by it that calls and keeps you there? Or, does the credit go to the innumerable religious places and famous tols that are there?

Rev. Sherring is responsible for this appreciation: "Benares is a city of no mean antiquity. Twenty-five centuries ago, at the least, it was famous Not only is she remarkable for her venerable age, but also for her vitality and vigour which she has constantly exhibited. While many cities and nations have fallen and perished, her sun has never gone down; on the contrary, for long ages past, it has shone with utmost meridian splendour."

Having got a nice place to live in, away from the hum of the city and close to the Ganges, I was inclined to stay on there. From the Hindu University, from some tols, and the Tilabhandeswarani temple I used to have good, educated men to keep me company.

If Calcutta can be called the city of palaces, and Lucknow the city of gardens, Benares can well be styled the city of temples. Between the Asi and the Varana, the time-honoured limits of the city,—hence called Varanasi, Benares,—there is an inward bend

of the river for a distance of about four miles. To quote my friend, Prof. Seshadri, who was for some years the principal of the Hindu University College at Benares, "Built on a natural rocky amphitheatre facing the east, the city unfolds a magnificent view at early dawn, towers and minarets glittering in the morning air and the flights of steps leading to the water crowded with the busy hum of devotees intent on their religious ceremonies, it stands in unaltered splendour when bathed in the Golden glow of sunset, its myriad temple-bells harkening people to prayer and all the life of the city promenading on the river. It is a great delight again to view it in the stillness of the night, wearing an age-long aspect of mystery and recalling a thousand memories of the history of India, ancient and modern."

If you want to see Benares at its best, you have to take a good pleasure boat and have a trip in it from the Asi in the South to the Varana in the north. Just before twilight, you should start, when the sunset glow will be far behind the city and the myriads of artificial lights near you. Slowly the boat will move and you pass all the 64 ghats, some most important, many of trifling note; some with broad stately steps, others, with steps broken or in an equally bad and neglected condition. Beyond them, you pass the panoramas of far-famed temples, mosques, palaces, Ashrams, hospitals, bazaars, and educational institutions.

Because of its extreme religious sanctity, several forget that Benares is also a centre of learning and of trade. How many have gone there for higher studies in the different departments of Sanskrit learning! That is one reason why Mrs. Besant started the Hindu College there which, under the fostering care and liberal patronage of the Hindu rulers and the selfless work and tactful stewardship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, has raised itself to the status of the world-famed Benares Hindu University. One whole day I

devoted to that grand institution under the distinguished guidance of my friend, Principal Rengaswami Iyengar. There I spent besides, half an hour with an intimate friend of mine, Dr. C. N. Menon M. A., Ph.D., D.Litt., whose scholarship in English is a theme of praise even among English scholars. He took me to the old, venerable Pandit Malaviya who said he was very happy to see me and complained that I did not, as I ought to have done, taken my residence in the University quarters. I told him that the only reason that prevented me from doing it was the long way that lay between the temples and the University. He then invited me to go and live there at another time. I did one bit of humble service there for our Malayalam Literature. On going round the University Library, I found there were no books in Malayalam. I told Panditji that that omission was painful to me, especially when Cochin had donated a large sum and Kerala yearly sent several students to that temple of learning. My remark visibly affected him, and he assured me that he would early try to remove that defect. I never left it at that. Soon after I reached Ernakulam, I sent some books to that library. I got these letters in reply.

"I shall duly present them to the University Library in your name. I shall also request the Vice-Chancellor to give a small annual grant for Malayalam books for the library." That is from Mr. Rengaswamy Iyengar.

Vice-Chancellor's Lodge,
Benares Hindu University,
2nd August 1936.

Dear Mr. Krishna Menon,

I thank you very cordially for the set of 95 Malayalam books which you have so kindly gifted to our University. These books will form the nucleus of a Malayalam section in our library. I hope you will

come round again to Benares and give us the pleasure of having you in our midst.

Trusting you are well,

Yours sincerely,
Sd. M. M. Malaviya.

A small annual grant is also sanctioned for the purchase of Malayalam books.

Dr. C. N. Menon was kind to me. In spite of the distance, he used to visit me frequently and once joined me in one of the enchanting boat trips I had in the Ganges. On the Vishu day, he and a number of other Malayalis responded to my invitation to lunch with me. That very pleasant day we all enjoyed. He sent me a copy of his well-known book on *Shakespeare Criticism* which would, I am sure, secure for him a place in the history of English literature. About my review of it, he thus wrote: "Though big British scholars have written to me about my book, not one appears to have understood what I wanted to say in it half as well as you. Is it due to a sympathy of souls between two Indians who follow somewhat similar ideals?" "I know how little I deserve all the kindness with which you literally overwhelmed me. In your presence, I feel awe and reverence as towards my father, of whom, indeed, you remind me."

The University has drifted me a long way off from the temples. I shall make an effort to go back to them. For, after all, they form the pivot of my pilgrimage. But before I bid Goodbye to Dr. C. N. Menon, I owe it to him to say that he is a bit of a genius and that both of us are happy in having known each other and become friends.

Though there are temples innumerable, I regularly went, both morning and evening, only to the Viswanathan and the Annapoorneswari temples. I finished my bath and worship before half past five

in the morning, so that Krishnaji might take me for the performance of ceremonies of which there are many which a pilgrim in Benares has ordinarily to attend to. Even when these were spread on the ten days, it would be 10 or 11 before I returned to my residence. In the afternoon, I would go out to see places and persons, and later on for a saunter with friends or for a trip in the river. The day's programme would be closed with a bath and worship. The Saptharshi Pooja in the Siva temple is a solemn service. It means as the words indicate, the worship of Visvanath by the seven sages, Maricchi and others. Priests now take the places of these. If properly performed, with the melodious chanting of the Vedic hymns, it is a solemn service. But, on the first occasion I was present for it, I found a young man, one of the seven, once pelting the protruding belly of another with the flowers intended for the diety. I gave an angry stare at the offending priest; and, after that, the act was not repeated. I always went with my ochre-coloured dress; I had my garland of tulsi beads, and there was the age in my favour. Thus I was permitted to have a comfortable place in these religious concourses. In the temple of the goddess too, the chanting of the hymns, after the last offering of the day, was one that stirred the depths of my devotional fervour. When I first went in, the priests were chanting Sri Sankara's hymn about Annapoorneswari. I thought they were not reciting it properly. I joined them. When they heard the verses repeated distinctly and in the fashion we adopted in Malabar, they were pleased. So also those who stood around me. Then, I was invited to go inside the enclosure near the sanctuary where the priests stood. In this way, my easy worship of the God and the Goddess was, by Their Grace, facilitated and made comfortable.

The Tilabhandesvaram temple, conducted by Malayali sanyasis of the Advaita order of Sankara,

and the Muti and Hospital owned by Sri Ramakrishna Mission I visited with genuine enthusiasm, and truly admired the noble work the band of selfless sanyasis were doing at both the places, particularly in the hospital.

Saranath, or, to be more precise, Saranagath, is about $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles to the north of Kasi. It was to this deer park that Buddha went after his enlightenment at Buddbagaya. Here he lived for some years with his disciples. Every place, every building or ruin, here as in several others, opens a flood-gate of thought or historical reminiscence. But I cannot linger over them but must hasten on. Thus I am forced to leap over centuries and to shut my eyes to the changes that have come over the place during the interval. There is a museum which has lodged all the finds that the labours of archaeologists could get at of the remnants of those years. There is in it a fine statue of Buddha which represents him preaching his first sermon. He sits cross-legged, and there is a marked serenity in his expression. On the base are engraved figures of his disciples. It is considered as a specimen of one of the finest sculptures. The excavated area contains remains of temples and monasteries. Recently, a magnificent temple with a lofty tower has been built by the Mahabodhi Society. The holy relics of Buddha which the Government of India presented to it are preserved there. When I visited the building, I found one of the two famous Japanese artists, entrusted with the work of adorning the walls and the roof of the edifice with the scenes from the life of the master, engaged on his task.

At Gaya, I shall not detain myself or the reader long. I went there only to perform the *Śrādhā* ceremony at Vishnupada. Otherwise, I would never have alighted there, where, I knew I could not get a nice place to halt, or good water for a wash. In spite

of its holy traditions, the place, and the Gayavali who officiated at my ceremony disappointed me. A young Mahavali clerk in the railway station was helpful to me; and the experienced agent of Krishnaji expedited my departure from there to Calcutta, my next halting-place.

Mr. G. S. Dutt, I. C. S., had wired to Principal Rangaswamy Aiyangar to tell me that I was to stay with him at Calcutta. When I reached it, his office had already gone to Darjiling, and he was staying back only to welcome me, he said. His son a barrister, was to look after me and show me everything of interest in Calcutta. Him I found to be a very nice young man, fit to be the issue of Sarojini Saroj Nalini and of the great Mr. Dutt. Mr. Dutt lived in a palatial residence at Calcutta in the Park Road, an aristocratic quarter of that large city of palaces. We parted with regret; but I said his duty as the Revenue Secretary to the Government of Bengal was more pressing and important than the entertainment of an individual guest. He said he had his notions on the subject; however, he had to go, he remarked. But, before he went, we had a long, a very long talk about his official career, his happy married life, the Saroj Nalini Institute and the Brahmachari movement he had started. These subjects covered a good deal of subsidiary topics. The last is the Indianised form of scouting. Of Saroj Nalini, all that I here can say is that every Indian should read her life written by her husband who actually worshipped her noble memory. She owned a great, a magnanimous soul. His personal story was extremely interesting to me. It is a pity he did not live to write of it.

I must here extract a few sentences from a letter I got from Mr. Dutt after I left Calcutta. It is dated 21-7-1936. "I was delighted to receive your letter of the 8th for which please accept my grateful thanks. In fact, not hearing from you for so long

after your departure from Calcutta, I was beginning to fear you had forgotten me! My son never wrote to me to Darjiling about having heard from you. He is such a lazy fellow, you see, in spite of your praise of him and affection for him

"I am so glad to learn that you enjoyed your visit to Calcutta. I am afraid I was not able to look after you at all, and I have a very guilty feeling about it. But you have a great heart, and your loving soul is unable to feel these shortcomings. This is why you have thanked me so kindly and cordially."

I shut my eyes and try to work out a list of places and of the persons I have visited in Calcutta. I find the bare list itself is too long to find a place here. But I cannot resist the temptation to record a list with an irreducible minimum of names. Without waiting for any order, I shall write as they come to me: Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Bose, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Mr. Vidhushekhar Bhattacharya, Dr. Kalidass Nag, Mr. O. C. Ganguli, Mr. Ramanada Chatterji, and Mr. Justice Biswas among great men; the Kalighat Temple, the Jain Temple, the Belur Mutt and shrines, the Panchavati of Sri Ramakrishna and the Dakshineswar temple where he had officiated as a priest, the Bose Institute, the University, the Saroj Nalini Institute, the Bengal Sahitya Parishat Society Office and Library, and the Victoria Museum among the institutions. Of the Bratachari movement and the Saroj Nalini Sabha I have already written elsewhere. The Parishat Society and its activities indicate the acme of Bengali patriotism and culture. The Belur Mutt and the Panchavati lie on the opposite sides of the Hughli. The Mutt is the centre of the Ramakrishna Mission. There are several structures attached to it; the office; the place of residence for the resident members of the order; the library; the

shrines to Sri Ramakrishna and to Vivekananda. An American devotee of Ramakrishna has donated an incredibly large sum for the construction of a marble shrine to that great sage of Dakshineswar. It was only half done when I went there. The library owns a unique collection of books. Two of the sanyasis were deputed by the Head of the Mutt to show me over the place. When I finished my round, I had the privilege of taking some welcome refreshments with a few of the residents which gave me time to hear a lot of the great missionary monk, Vivekananda. To Santiniketan I could not go, as Mr. Dutt got a phone message to say that the college was closed, the poet was not in residence and there was only the caretaker there. It was a sad disappointment to me.

But the hours that I spent with Drs. Sunitikumar and Nag and Mr. Ganguli made me forget other mental worries, at least when I was with them. I shall always remember the lunch I had with my dear friend, Dr. Suniti Kumar, when he, Dr. Nag and I had a most interesting talk over our sumptuous meal. But the supreme delight came when I was with Sir and Lady J. C. Bose. To a phone message from my young friend, Mr. Dutt, Lady Bose replied, "Bose is not in good health. But he has deputed his assistant to show everything of interest to your friend. Please come at 2.30." We two reached there in time. While Lady Bose was talking to us, who comes down but Sir Jagadish Bose. "When I heard the words Navar, Cochinite and all that, I could not resist the temptation of having a look at him." "There is another reason why we should see each other," I said. "What is that?" he asked me. "You have sent me a photo of yours, and a letter to me in which you have stated that mine was the first donation that you got for your Institute from South India." Then he got up and closed his two hands as if in worship and then sat down. I too did so. "More than once you

have invited me to Cochin. His Highness your Maharaja when he came here had pressed me to go over. But I have been chained to my work here. My ill-health also is partly responsible for my not leaving home. Yet I will come and see your country one day." Then, over our tea, he spoke of his foreign experiences, of his estate in Darjiling and of other matters. He asked me a lot of questions about Cochin. But not a word did he utter about his outstanding inventions in his fields of research! That is the divine humility of noble natures.

"If we go on talking like this, probably you will miss the object of your visit," he said. I consider it a pilgrimage to see and worship you two who have dedicated your all to the cause of science," I replied. "I have heard that Naves are never flatterers," he remarked. To which I spoke with warmth: "True. But they worship great souls. Their karamas they regard as family deities. That, perhaps, you have not heard." He appreciated my retort. Then we took leave of Sir and Lady Bose. He deputed two of his assistants to go with me and show me over the place.

It is impossible for me to describe his ideal lecture-room, the numberless, many-flous, delicate instruments all made in India alone for his world-famed experiments, how plants are poisoned and then revived, so on and so on. Of one small experiment I shall say a few words. On a table, a tiny plant was kept in water in a small glass vessel, which was covered with a small glass plate. A delicate wire from an equally small instrument, touched the main stalk of the plant. When it nourished itself, a bell in the instrument would start ringing. When a passing cloud in the sky or a paper over the glass screened it from the sun, the bell would stop ringing.

Before I left Calcutta for Puri, I went to worship Mother Goddess in the famous Kalighat temple.

Puri or Jagunnath was the last place in my pilgrimage. There I took up quarters, as advised by Mr. Dutt, in a nice hotel on the beach, run by a Bengali. When he knew that I was the guest of Mr. G. S. Dutt at Calcutta and that it was his son who directed me to that hotel, he was all attention to me. The beach is two miles away from the town and the famous Jagunnath temple. But the proprietor of the hotel assured me that he would make every arrangement for my worship and offerings in the temple, and place a car at my service. He was good at his word. He even had the *prasadam* brought to the hotel by a priest.

As people in Cochin resort to Alwaye and Chowarah during the summer season, the Bengalis go to Puri at that time to rest and recuperate. There is no river in Puri, but the people enjoy the breeze from the sea. Crowds of people there will be on the beach from 5 to 8 p.m.; some persons remain even to late hours. On certain sacred days hundreds will be seen bathing in the sea. My idea was to rest at Puri for ten days and then to return to Ernakulam. But an electrical engineer who was coming to supervise some work of the Chandrie Electric Company at Ernakulam prevailed on me to cut short my stay, so that we might start and travel all the way together.

From Calcutta I heard that Tagore was at Puri. He was not there. But I visited, as I was asked to do by Mr. Dutt, a Saroj Nalini welfare centre there, directed by a niece of the poet. She said her uncle lived about 30 miles away. She was very kind to me and explained the nature of the work done there and showed me over the place.

It is not my idea to copy down from any book the descriptions of temples and thier gopurams. The architectural beauty of those at Puri, the way the rice for the offering is boiled in several clay pots,

one placed over another, have been, I believe, graphically described by eminent travellers. The temple at Puri is a very ancient one. About its spiritual glory, and the different traditions about the temple and its construction several puranas make special mention. These too many must have read. But there is a folksong prevalent among the masses of Orissa which most may not have heard. That song embodies a lovely tale. With that I shall close this chapter.

During the cremation of the body of Sri Krishna, it was noticed that the navel was never reduced to ashes. A devotee took it and brought it from Dwaraka to Nilagiri in Puri and deposited it there. That is why even now Jagannatha Swami is called Neelamadhavan. After the Kaliyuga began, Indradyumna, the celebrated Pandya king, once requested his family preceptor, Vidyapathi, to find out a God who would readily give salvation to a pious devotee. The preceptor started on his quest; and, in the course of his weary wanderings, he reached Puri. There were no Aryans there then. Consequently, Vidyapathi, famished and fatigued, had to seek the assistance of Visvavasu, the Sabara chieftain of the locality. Visvavasu asked his fair daughter to look after the comely stranger. Vidyapathi saw Visvavasu daily departing from the house early in the morning and returning to it only late at night. Asked for the cause, the daughter said that her father went to Nilagiri to do service to Neelamadhava. Vidyapathi expressed a desire to do likewise; but Visvavasu did not favour his desire. The preceptor and the daughter had by that time become so enamoured of each other that they could not live apart for a long time. This Visvavasu knew and favoured the alliance. But Vidyapathi said that he could think of marriage only after his worship of Neelamadhavan. The Sabaran had Vidyapathi's eyes blindfolded and took him to the

presence of the God. Vidyapathi, unknown to Visvasu, scattered mustard-seeds all the way through. Vidyapathi saw an unusual effulgence of light when he went to the presence of Neelamadhavan. Vidyapathi thought that that was the deity which his master wanted. He went back and brought Indradyumnan to that place and both had satisfying worship of Neelamadhava. The Raja, before he went back to his kingdom, made all arrangements for the construction of a magnificent temple for Neelamadhava, and made Vidyapathi and his father-in-law, Visvasu, the custodians for the construction and for the future management of the temple.

It is in that temple that I worshipped three or four times before I left Puri. Kalabhairavan, and the Ganges water which, for me, had, by that time reached, Ernakulam, were fittingly worshipped by me on my happy return to my home.

Let me conclude this chapter with an extract from a letter, dated 23-11-1111, which I got from the late Mr. U. Kandir Menon.

"It is a matter of extreme satisfaction that the long and tedious journey did not, in any way, affect your health. I have no doubt that your absolute faith in God, your religious habits, your self-determination, your strictness and punctuality in everything in which you are, in any way, concerned, these and other qualities of yours have helped you considerably in making the tour quite enjoyable to you. I may tell you, in all sincerity, that you are one of the few who have the courage of their convictions and who are always very straightforward, conscientious and strict in all their dealings. Those who do not know you well may misunderstand you, but I am sure the more they know you the more they will realise the sincerity of your actions. May God bless you with long life and prosperity."

—oOo:—

XVIII MY DAYS AS A MARRIED MAN.

In the previous chapters of this work, I have spoken of my wife in several places. No wonder. For she enters into the warp and woof of the texture of my life. I loved her with a strength and singleness of heart which is the heritage of those who reach manhood without indulging in emotional excursions by the way. From the twenty-sixth year of my life, we have rarely lived apart; and in those few months when we had to be separate, I used to be disconsolate and my house not in proper working order. She has been the divinity who presided over my household, who seconded me in all my varied activities who looked after my personal comforts and nursed me when I got ill. How truly, how grandly has Kalidasa hit off a true wife's high function.

മുഖാഭാസം വാസം സർവ്വധർമ്മം
സർവ്വം ഹി വൃദ്ധം ഭൂമിശ്ചൈവൈ.

Good wives are the source of all dharma.

Similarly sentiments we find expressed in the Skanda Puranam also.

ധർമ്മം സർവ്വവിദ്യം ധർമ്മാർത്ഥം സർവ്വം
ധർമ്മാർത്ഥം ധർമ്മാർത്ഥം ധർമ്മാർത്ഥം
ധർമ്മം സർവ്വവിദ്യം ധർമ്മാർത്ഥം സർവ്വം
ധർമ്മാർത്ഥം ധർമ്മാർത്ഥം ധർമ്മാർത്ഥം

No person can repay an ideal wife for the assistance she gives him in the discharge of his dharma.

Our life has given me an added charm to some verses of Bhavabhuti in his grand drama, *Uttara-ramacharitam*, a favourite work mine, and a personal reason to admire his insight into human sentiments. To one slokam (verse) at least let me refer.

മനുഷ്യജാതം സർവ്വം സർവ്വവിദ്യം
മനുഷ്യജാതം സർവ്വവിദ്യം സർവ്വവിദ്യം
മനുഷ്യജാതം സർവ്വവിദ്യം സർവ്വവിദ്യം
മനുഷ്യജാതം സർവ്വവിദ്യം സർവ്വവിദ്യം

If one loves another intensely, that another is one's eternal source of happiness, though that another does nothing, but only remains at one's side.

How well it soothes each to be the other by.

At no time have I been in robust health, and it is due to her unremitting care, to her sympathetic help that I have been able to do what little I have done. Being of a sensitive and easily irritable nature, I must have used harsh words at times, I suppose, when things went contrary to my wish or advice. But she has never been other than patience personified. She knew she lived in the shrine of my heart. I have never seen her in an angry mood; never heard her use a strong word of reprimand even to a most erring servant. There is a sunset softness in her sweet temper. That never failed her. But she is firm though calm.

When it was decided that I should marry her, I planned a course of studies for her in Sanskrit, Malayalam and English. It was not an ambitious but a practical one. That was more or less followed until we settled down together. In Sanskrit, her grandmother and Sriman Krishnan Embranthiri coached her. Kanakath Kidtu Menon, Mr. Atiyath Kochu Govinda Menon and Mr. S. Visvanatha Iyer, of Messrs. V. Sundara Iyer & Sons, gave her lessons in English, Malayalam and other subjects. She also interested herself in domestic duties.

Afterwards, I took up the role of the teacher. Many books we have read together, in English sanskrit and Malayalam. She also read alone books selected by me, or by her friends, and those suggested by others.

She was also given opportunities to widen her vision by travel. For, apart from the All-India tour she had with her mother, I took her wherever I went

in this State, and in Travancore; I also took her to Madras more than once, to Trichinopoly and to Mysore. To the hills we always went together. At Madras, we always lived with Mr. and Mrs. S. K. Swami. His first wife was alive then. She and Swami would never allow us to live elsewhere. She, like us, had an aversion to malicious gossip, and her home was to us a place of warm mutual affection, of generous enjoyment. The first time I took my wife I stopped in Madras for ten days. That was in the December of 1908. We attended the Indian National Congress. We went to see the Museum, the Library, the Park, the Presidency College, a few shops and the Adyar.

Daily she got up at 4.30 a.m. or 5 a.m. Never later than that, unless she was sick. She went to bed at 9.30 or 10 p.m. In the noon, she took an hour's rest. Bath, prayers and domestic work took up a good part of her time. Still she found time to devote herself to reading, and writing and social work.

Mr. M. Narayan Menon, a friend intimately known to both of us, tells me that I have not sufficiently stressed the religious aspect in the life of my wife. I admit the defect; but do not know how to cure it properly. For, religion has entered into the very warp and woof of her life. She trained her children not by the easy way of precept but by the hard one of example, and showed them the dignity of every act when spiritualised by a lofty motive. Both her mother and her illustrious grandmother were very God-fearing persons; her family owned a shrine where, like any other ordinary temple, worship was carried on. Thus she was brought up in a religious atmosphere; and in Kumaramalaya too, we always tried to maintain the religious life of an asrama hermitage. She has her hours for prayer and for the reading of religious works; and every spare minute she uses for nama-gapam. In fact, beneath the shifting tides of time

MY DAYS AS A MARRIED MAN.

and circumstance, her heart she has firmly moored on to a spiritual anchor, and so she safely weathers her course through the wordly career.

Besides helping me in my social service, she had other bits of humanitarian work of her own, and was also connected with societies and movements for that sort of work.

But what I most admired in her, in this connection, is the patience with which she tackled the beggar problem. I cannot suffer the presence of able-bodied, militant beggars. They have also the knack of butting in just when you are busily working or taking rest after some heavy work. But they could not put her out. If she were alone, not a person would leave our gate without getting something from her. It might be some pies, food or rice or a piece of cloth.

The beggar problem, it is daily becoming a menace to the town. The State has to step in to assist the public. Otherwise, it will surely assume proportions which it would be difficult to be controlled by either.

In 1901, we started feeding the poor on the new moon day in every Karkidagam. When the number of persons began to considerably increase, we changed boiled rice into rice-gruel. From 1920, we have had to manage with rice and pice. On every Saturday, we give alms to the poor. Even at the rate of a pie to each, it comes to two or three rupees. So, one can realise the number of beggars that come every week to our door. Mostly, these come from the adjacent localities of the town. The indigenous persons are few. But there it is.

Another unusual art about her is her ability, to prepare charts for feasts of the needed articles. I am hopelessly at sea there. I cannot conceive as to how she managed to get at the quantities of the ingredients that were wanted. She is a good cook and

knows to prepare not the usual articles of food alone, but also several sweet dishes and chutnies. To spare her from every culinary trouble and other domestic work, I keep, as a rule, three or four servants and, occasionally, a maid-servant. Yet, she will never be satisfied unless she herself supervised their work in the house and in the compound.

"Nothing lovelier can be found in woman" wrote Milton "than to study household good and good works in her husband to promote." The complement is supplied by Abraham Lincoln when he said "Men ought to be mighty good to women, for nature gave them the big end of the log and mighty little strength to do it with."

We have been happy to get, with rare exceptions, good servants. And we always treated them as if they were members of the family. We encouraged them to read, and also to cultivate any special aptitudes they had inherited. For, one was a painter, another a poet, and a third knew a bit of Hindi and Sanskrit.

"We may live without poetry, music and art;
We may live without conscience, and live without heart;

We may live without friends, we may live
without books;

But civilised men cannot live without cooks"

There is much truth in this sentiment; and there was no justification for the lady who divorced her husband because he chanced to say "I can manage without you, but can't live without a cook."

We had the happiness of being served by many good servants. Curiously enough, many of them bore the name of Krishnan. Two of these deserve special mention for their loyalty and devotion to us, and for their reliability. One of these was with us for very near twelve years. He died, poor Krishnan, of a very violent epileptic fit, even before the Doctor could diagnose the cause of the disease. I alone know

how much I felt for him and for his sudden loss. The other Krishnan is still with us. When he and Lekshmi Amma are in the house, my wife is considerably relieved of her worry over the management of the house. Both are good, God-fearing persons. So are Papoo who pulled the rickshaw, and Umma who cleaned the yard around the house. These two also are regarded by us as if they are units of our household. They have grown grey in our service. Of Papoo, my grand-son Krishnan, now an Honours B. A. of the Madras and Delhi universities, has published an appreciative sketch in an English weekly. I shall call a few lines from it.

"To us the children Papoo was good company. He would not only join us in our games but to the irritation of the elders he would even help us to play practical jokes on them. The only persons who could stop him were grand-father and grand-mother for both of whom he had great respect.

"Now and again, he would take us for a joy ride. This was a great event to us, for it was a pleasure to be in the rickshaw, when Papoo was pulling it. He knew most of the passers-by on the road and would, to our delight, crack jokes with them and snub most. My sister who was a snob in her childhood (he means my sweet Parvathi who is now with her husband at Canberra) used to grumble about this habit of his, but her reprimand fell on deaf ears . . . But he knew where frivolity must end and discipline begin."

Even after he left our service, on account of old age, every Sunday he visits us to enquire after our welfare.

Another peculiar feature of my wife is her distaste for costly ornaments and articles of dress. Her tastes have ever been simple; but there was never any hint of meanness about them. No, never.

Our marriage, I invariably think, is a bridal made in heaven—chaste and calm.

“As unto the ^{man} the cord is,
 So unto the man is woman;
 Though she bends him, she obeys him,
 Though she draws him, yet she follows.
 Useless each without the other.”

There is some substance in what a sane writer once said, “Everything is dust in the balance compared to the possession of an incomparable wife.” At any rate, it is good, it is lovely when man and wife dwell together in unity of mind and disposition — a vexation to their foes and a feast of gladness to their friends.

Our union has been blessed with a daughter and two sons. In their upbringing we took particular care, and the loving response they gave us in their formative years has been a source of credit to them.

Once Mr. Mills, then Principal of the College here, asked me in all seriousness as to how I managed to bring up my children so nicely. I told him it was a trade secret, but that I had no objection to communicate it to Mrs. Mills. It is aptly said that “the crowning blessing falls to the lot of those whose children prove worthy of their privilege.” In them we stand blessed.

Sankaran, after graduation here, went to Cambridge and took Tripos in Modern Literature and Economics. It was a feat that he should have succeeded in doing that in three years. He went to England on 19-8-1921 and returned on 7-9-1924. Janaky passed her Intermediate Examination in the May of 1921 and passed her Honours Examination in Sanskrit in the May of 1924. Gopalan had a distaste for certain subjects, and so was not forging ahead as his brother and sister. But when once he got into his congenial group, he thrived well and creditably got his diploma in electrical engineering.



Mr. T. C. Sankara Menon, Mr. T. C. Gopa'a Menon,
Sry. T. C. Jiraky Amma.

MY DAYS AS A MARRIED MAN.

It was my wish in my early days to go to Oxford for a course of study in Literature. For want of money, it remained an unfulfilled wish. Then it struck me that at least one of my children should have the benefit of an English University life. Where is the money to come from? I had to provide funds not only for the education of my own children, but also to help one nephew and two grandnephews for their studies. Some of my brother's children too were with me for their schooling in Ernakulam. And I was only feeling my difficult upward way in my profession.

One of my brother's children, Srinathi T. C. Kochukutty Amma, B. A., L. T., subsequently wrote to me about the help she had received from me.

"I don't know how to express my gratitude for all that you had been doing for me The giver, in this case, cannot realise the greatness of the thing given as the person who receives it. I know that I am indebted to you for all that I am now. I won't be able to repay you even a hundredth of what you have given me."

Both my revered master and Mr. V. K. Sankaran Menon knew how I was straining to keep myself afloat. They sympathised with me sincerely. Mr. Sankaran Menon told me that, as my brother's wife was using family funds for the education of her children, there was every justification for me in seeking her assistance to send my son to England. He said he would himself go and sound her on the subject. As a result of his mission, she promised Rs. 5000 towards the cost of Sankaran's English trip. That was in the March of 1921. But in June, she retracted her word and regretted her inability to send me money. I wrote a stiff letter. That brought the sum which I at once remitted to England, as the exchange was exceedingly favourable. The rest I made up. Even

family which he raised to an affluent position. He was famed as a physician for the treatment of poison cases. He liked me much and I had an admiration for him. Soon after his death, I got this letter from Mr. T. A. Ananta Rama Iyer, who was then the Munsiff of Thalappilly.

16-7-'82

My dear friend,

Vadakanohery.

I am extremely sorry for the death of Mr. Echathra Menon in whom I have lost a personal and true friend. Of course the loss is too severe a one so far as you are concerned What God has ordained for us we must calmly submit to. I know his death adds to your burden. God will guide you in all your actions.

Kindly permit me to congratulate you on the success of the suit in the District court. I hope the matter will end there.

I have had heavy work in the last quarter and I am now enjoying my leisure as usual.

Wishing you all success in life,

Yours ever sincerely

(Sd.) T. A. Ananta Ramier.

Sankaran was young. I could not think of any Indian in England who might be asked to give him a helping hand. To Mr. Paruvakkat Narayana Menon I wrote on the subject. He gave me some relief.

Jayavilas,

Egmore. 11-4-20.

My dear Aniyar,

Yours of the 9th instant. I saw Sankarankutty some three days ago accidentally. He is now busy with his examination. I shall certainly take him to Madhavan Nayar and arrange with Palat and Lady Sankaran Nayar to look after him in England. He is a particular protege of Candeth's and you may

rest assured that Candeth himself will make every arrangement for his convenient stay in England
 . . . You know that Ratnam also goes

Thinking of Cochin Politics, especially the future of the Nayars, does often give me the creeps. Everybody's hand seems to be turned against us. After my retirement, we have to put our heads together and devise some means of setting us right with the authorities—or setting the latter right with us.

Yours affectionately,

Sd. P. Narayana Menon.

Professor Candeth liked my son and daughter very much, and he was of immense assistance to me to shape their studies and to see that they were comfortable in their college life. Here is the certificate he gave my son when he went up to Cambridge.

Retreat, San Thome,

Madras, 1-5-20.

Mr. T. C. Sankara Menon comes from a very distinguished Malabar family. Both his parents to-day occupy a very unique position in Malayalam literature. We of the younger generation owe them a great deal, for they have done much to create and shape Malayalam prose, and direct the taste of the youth of to-day and to interpret to the Malayalam peoples the ideas and literature of the west.

It has been my privilege to have enjoyed their friendship for many years, and so I can speak of Sankara Menon from a knowledge extending over many years. I shall leave his teachers to dwell about his work in Colleges.

But I can bear testimony to what they cannot do so well; his character and his general fitness to join an English University. Knowing so well the home in which he was brought up I can say that we cannot send out to an English University a finer type of young man, and if admitted to an English College I

feel sure that he will do credit to his University and his home.

Sd. M. A. Candeth,
(Kings College, Cambridge)
Indian Educational Service,
Professor,
Presidency College,
Madras.

(True copy)

Mr. Kuppakkad Govinda Menon was a friend of Col. T. Lawrence of Arabian fame and knew his mother very well. Mr. William Lawrence, a brother of the Colonel, on his way to take up his teaching work at Delhi, came to see me, on 23-10-1913, as he had heard of me from Govinda Menon. So, Govinda Menon wrote to Mrs. Lawrence. She wrote me a kind but not very encouraging letter. Mr. George Eliot Browning promised me that he would write to his cousin, Mr. Oscar Browning, who would be very helpful to my son.

Mr. Browning was the Chief Engineer of the Public works Department of the Cochin state. At first, being of a credulous disposition, he had a tough tussle with my brother. But when he came to know of the character and ability of his subordinate, they became the best of friends and remained so till the end. His wife was the daughter of my master Mr. A. F. Sealy. Thus, Mr. and Mrs. Browning became close friends of my wife and myself. Mr. Browning was not, what one would call, a worldly wise man. So, he had some trouble with his investments. Mr. Doraswamy Iyer and myself tried to pull him through; but our efforts proved fruitless.

"Just a few lines", he wrote to me on 14. 6. 1920, "for all you tried to arrange last week. Unfortunately it fell through; but yours and Mr. Doraswamy Iyer's genuine affection was a revelation to me, and will be a bond between us all my life.

"I have written to my cousin Oscar Browning, again asking him to nominate your son, if he has not already done so.

"Any one who has been to Liverpool or to Tilbury Docks, will realise that to build docks along Ernakulam's future "sea-front," along and behind which the better residential buildings must in the near future be constructed, would simply ruin Ernakulam's future as the capital of the State and Chief Residential Centre.

"The smoke, coal-dust, and thousand and one things which would be blown eastward from the steamers if so misplaced, would simply play havoc with Ernakulam's future growth and extension."

He took a genuine interest in the welfare of Cochin. He had a hand in the inception of the Cochin Harbour and the proper development of its railway line. Even after he went to England, he and his wife wrote to me to help him to safeguard his interests in some estate here which he owned along with others.

"This letter", so he wrote on 16-1-1931, "therefore, is to ask you to do all you possibly can for me in the matter, partly because of my belief in your integrity and legal skill, and also because my wife and I can never forget the true affection you always had for her father, Mr. Seely, and because also of the friendship you and your wife have always shown to me." I replied him at once as to what he should do in the matter. To that Mrs. Browning wrote to me that her husband had been "ill for several weeks" and was "very shaky and unfit for any business worries." I was left helpless; for, what could I do but to sympathise with my friends over their troubles?

Let me hasten to my son at Cambridge. Though he was young, I had no fear whatever that he would go astray. For he was a level-headed boy and very godly-minded besides.

Let me here quote a few sentences from a letter of his from Cambridge dated 16. 11. 1921.

"Thanks to the training I have had, I am so little concerned about my character, for the simple reason that I cannot think of its foundations being shaken . .

"For me it is all the examinations. They give me all the anxiety and plenty of it too

"One thing is sure, I will not have a two-fold blame on me — doing bad at examinations and being extravagant

"The three other Indians who are reading for the English Tripos are very much older than myself and have come over after doing a good deal of teaching work. Our English tutor told us that we (Indians) showed ourselves really good hands at writing English. We have four essays with him. Subject for the next essay is "Had Milton been hanged in 1660, what place would he have taken among English poets?" I told him at once that he would still have been "higher" than them all. He saw the joke and we had a laugh".

There was no fear of extravagance in him. It was just the other way. Practically, he had a life of asceticism and kept the cost of living to an irreducible minimum. Mr. K. Chandy of the Mysore Civil Service, while in England, wrote to me in high terms about my son's life and conduct there. Sirdar K. M. Panikkar while editing the *Hindustan*, wrote about him thus. "I am delighted to hear that your son has got through his Examination. Of course it was expected of him. I heard some very good things spoken of him the day before yesterday at Calcutta."

Mr. Cotton, while the British Resident here, wanted Sankaran to be appointed as the Police Commissioner. I got a timely hint of it. So, I went to the Palace to pray that he might be given a footing in the educational service, as he might not be able to do full justice to the other post. My request and the

principle that was behind it were much appreciated by His Highness and the Consort. His appointment to the College was gazetted on 6-6-1925. I felt considerably relieved by it. The only other incident that I have to record about him at this stage is his marriage. His Karanavan, Judge Mr. T. C. Krishna Menon, was keen on my son marrying his grand-daughter, Srimathi K. Thankam Amma, B. A. To every one concerned, the suggestion appealed, and so the marriage was performed on the 22nd of April 1928.

Events so forcibly focussed that the marriage of my daughter had to be performed on 22-6-1922. While Janaky was in the second year of her Honours Course, the late Srimathi Taravath Ammalu Amma, Dr. T. M. Nair's sister and a friend of my wife and myself, informed us that Mr. C. P. Karunakara Menon, B. A., would like to have her as his wife. She strongly supported the offer. Soon after, Mr. Paruvakkat Narayana Menon also wrote to me on the subject. I was in a fix. I did not know what to do. My daughter and myself were eager that she should complete her Sanskrit studies, so far as she could. However, we two had a full talk over the matter when I put the pros and cons of the subject before her. She heard me calmly. Then, I told her that she could take her own time to give me her final reply. A week after I had it.

..... "But it has been my fondest desire and ambition that I should graduate myself and get a degree. So I would like to have my marriage affair thought of after my final examination

"This is not flattery, father; few are lucky like me in having such a father. I would have given my answer then only; the way you put it gave me a lot of encouragement. But I did not want to make you think it to be a hasty answer

This is what I have to say. I leave the rest to you."



Mr. T. C. Krishna Menon, Mr. T. C. Narayana Menon,
 Mr. T. Sudhakara Menon Sry. T. C. Parvathy Amma.

This letter gave me no help and not much light. I, therefore Placed the matter before my friend, Mr. Doraswamy Iyer, who asked me a week's time for him to give me his opinion. He wrote to some of his friends in Madras to know more about the intended bridegroom, and also took Mr. V. K. Sankara Menon into his confidence. He definitely advised me that the offer should at once be accepted and acted upon. Fortunately, Mr. Karunakara Menon raised no objection to Janaky staying in the Queen Mary's College Hostel and appearing for her examination. I shall remember with gratitude the assistance which Professors Candeth and Kuppuswami Sastri gave her in her career in the Presidency College. When my wife and myself visited Mr. Sastri with Mr. Candeth, he generously told me, "I shall regard Janaky as my daughter and look after her life and work in the college. Only let her take care of her health." In spite of the timely warning, she neglected it, got ill, and was able to secure only a second class.

Many were the letters and telegrams of congratulation that Janaki and I received on her marriage and on her success in her examination. H. H. the abdicated Ruler, Janakey's *guru* Prof. Kuppuswami Sastri, Raja Vasudeva Raja and many of my friends blessed her on the occasion and wished her all happiness in her married life. Along with their felicitations, others desired that this event should not stand in the way of her studies. "I hope", so Raja Vasudeva Raja wrote to me, "she will complete her Honours Course in spite of the marriage, and I have no doubt her husband will see the wisdom of her completing it." In a similar strain were the letters from Prof. Seshadri and Justice Pandalai. "I hope this won't prevent our being able to claim your daughter as the first lady Sanskrit Honours graduate of our University. Prof. Candeth continued his note. "I showed your letter to Sri. C. Sankaran Nair the day he left to

London, and he asked me to mention his congratulations also in writing to you, because he said that he knew the bridegroom from the time that he was a student, and he felt assured that he would have made big name if he had not gone into Govt. Service".

Naini Jal

Dear Janaki Amma,

May 12th 1922.

I heard from your father yesterday that your marriage takes place on the 27th of this month. Will you accept my sincerest congratulations? I would have loved to be there, but I think your father treated me rather shabbily in letting me know only so late in the day. Hence I am unfortunate in not being able to be present. But you can take it from me that none is so pleased and no one wishes you greater happiness than your ever sincere friend,

Sd. K. M. Panikkar.

His Highness the Maharaja and his consort Lady Rama Varma were pleased to give her ten pounds as a gift. Both the consort and Mrs. Pattedil Narayana Menon spoke to me, on hearing of her success, that they then really appreciated my well-meant obstinacy in sticking to my resolve about the prosecution of her studies.

Gopalan did very well in his electrical studies at Bangalore. His Principal, Mr. Govinda Pillai, wrote to me very highly about his behaviour and his work. Though reserved and taciturn, Gopalan possesses a fine, obliging disposition and all the other qualities of an ideal Scout. He has got systematic habits and has cultivated a taste for general reading. He is an expert in physical training and keeps an improvised gymnasium in Kumaralayam to give free instruction to those who cherish the good old principle of *mens sana in corpore sano*, (a sound mind in a sound body) and also to those who wish to be athletes. He

has married Srimathi Kalyanikutty Amma, the youngest daughter of the late Dr. A. G. Menon, the first elected Deputy Persident of the Cochin Legislative Council. Silently he is very much liked by his parents.

Before I part, for the present, from my children, I have to speak of two others who sincerely considered my wife and myself as their parents and whom we truly regarded as our children. I mean Mr. A. Narayana Menon and his ideal wife Srimathi P. Janaky Amma. Mr. Narayana Menon's house is in Etakkulam, and that of Srimathi Janaky Amma is in pattambi. But they have been for years permanently residing in Ootacamund where Narayana Menon owns an estate and houses and where he carries on his trade. In his beautiful Turret on the Elk Hill and its attractive garden it has been our luck to live, in the summer season of a few years and to enjoy their filial ministrations. When I see both of them, I cannot but think that one is made for the other; and their very faces bespeak of their unsophisticated, happy, generous nature. In the silent, orderly management of their affairs, in the smiling welcome they give their guests and visitors, in the service they do to those who seek it at their hands, there is an artless spontaneity that is arresting.

The only return my wife and myself can give to these two blessed persons for the unique kindness they have invariably shown to us is to pray, which we with fervour do, that they and their sons may live long, that they may ever be healthy, wealthy and wise.

In connection with our yearly so-journ to the hills, I have to record with pleasure that both my wife and myself have found it helpful to maintain our health. It serves as a tonic treatment for us. There we get mental rest, lot of physical exercise and, to me, some congenial intellectual nourishment. More

than these, it is from Ooty, rightly called the Queen among the Indian Hill stations, that we gained the friendship of Mr. and Mrs. K. Seetharama Rao, of Mr. and Mrs. Chhobra, of Mr. and Mrs. Wadia and of the Kavalappara people. That we regard as a valuable asset. Mr. Seetharama Rao is a business man. "From humble beginnings, he has built up an organization and hotel-keeping that can now claim to cater to some 15,000 persons, daily in at least four of the important cities of South India." To him business is not merely a source of gain, but one of "service based on honesty and truth", and truth, according to him, "is God and service is Prayer." He is a true bhakta, and is fortified in his work with the blessings of his father and the good wishes of his friends and customers.

The Chhobras come from Punjab; and there is about them a graceful combination of sweetness and firmness. Dr. Chhobra is a profound scholar and a blessed poet. As an archaeologist, he goes where light takes him, but he will suffer no spineless abrogation of his judgment. The Wadias are, like me, members of the theosophical society. Mr. Wadia was at onetime, the right-hand man of Mrs. Besant, a fact that is a sufficient guarantee of his intellectual equipment, of his power of vigorous expression and of business qualities. Madame Sophie Wadia edits the aryan Path and the organ of the India P. E. N. organization, both of which she devotes to enlarge the intellectual horizon of the Indian literary world. The trouble she takes over her work can be realised only by those practised in literary workmanship. Both are well-known for their acts of philanthropy. There is an old-world aristocratic air about the Kavalappara people. Their polite, charming ways have evoked a chord of sympathy in us that there exists to-day a sort of freemasonry among us all. I wish my friend Mr. Babu Nair will one day write a short history of

his ancient family which is famed in the annals of Kerala.

My wife's health has not been what one would call robust. Apart from the daily household duties, which claimed a good part of her time, we had, off and on, to receive our guests and visitors. We had our stated hours for prayer and worship and for the reading of the Puranas. In the face of these, I used to wonder how my wife found time to devote to social work and to engage herself in her literary pursuits, her contributions to both of which are solid and considerable.

Though she was not robust, her bodily condition was all along good, and she had an infinite fund of vitality; and her regular habits kept her going wonderfully. However, on two occasions, she gave us cause for extreme anxiety. On both occasions it was the care and skill of my friend, Dr. C. Ramunni Menon that snatched her from the claws of death. But she was not responsible for the cause. On the first occasion, it was the presence of a small particle of a foreign body in the artery that created the trouble. All on a sudden, one morning, she became insensible, and her heart began to fail. At 4 a. m., next morning, Dr. C. Ramunni Menon sent for Dr. Robert Gunther. He came and after examination and consultation, said to my friend, "You have done all that could possibly be done. Let us leave her to God."

Two days previous to that day, I had started a massage treatment, and I was expected to have perfect rest in the day time and uninterrupted sleep at night. I had neither. In the hall next to my room were Messrs. K. Rama Menon, Kaimakulangara Achyuta Menon, and G. V. Subramanya Iyer, sitting sleepless the whole night. Mrs. Rama Menon was with my wife. Mr. Damodara Menon, Mr. Rama Menon's clerk, was on his legs the whole night fetching medicines and

other things as wanted by the doctor. How could I get sleep? I could hear Dr. Gunther's words. G. V., who came into my room to speak words of consolation, could only shed a few drops of tears on my body. Mr. P. Gopala Menon sent round word to our friends as to the critical condition of my wife, and the front yard of our house was soon filled by them. I could not face them. Only when my revered master came, Gopala Menon asked me to come out and see him. Seeing me crying, he patted me on my back and spoke a few comforting words. I paid my obeisance to all those who were present and went in. At this juncture, Dr. Ramunni Menon went in and, as he said afterwards, mixed two or three stimulants and injected the mixture as a last resort. By the grace of God, that had an instant effect, and the heart began to slowly revive. At 7 A. M., he came to me and said with a heavenly smile "You can continue your treatment." I bowed to God, gave a grateful responsive smile, but the treatment I cancelled.

The next time, the trouble did not start as abruptly as before, and she was conscious. But she had to suffer unbearable pain for a day and a half. Dr. Ramunni Menon diagnosed the disease. To make himself sure, my friend, Dr. P. Madhava Menon, the Civil Surgeon in British Cochin, was sent for. He put his finger on the very spot where the trouble lay. It could, if at all, be removed only by a very serious operation. Anxiety was visibly written on Ramunni Menon's face. Before day break, my wife was taken to the hospital on a stretcher. At 3 P. M., precise, I washed and put aside a small sum as offering to Siva and Sri Parvathi in the local temple. Just as I did it, I heard the sound of a conch and of temple bells. That fact gave me much relief, especially, as at that time, such sounds could never be normally heard. I did not go to the hospital but went to the temple to pray, and remained there till my friend sent word to

me that the operation was successfully performed. The patient was beyond any danger.

For a few days, I used to be flooded with letters as I had my time taken up with matters connected with the nursing of my wife. My nephew Mr. Narayan Menon was in charge of it at the hospital. Even otherwise, it was not possible to answer them all. I did not attempt it. From one of the very few I kept, I shall quote a sentence or two. The letter, dated 4-1-1917 from Benares was from Mr. P. Gopala Menon. "I am anxious—I have come to realise what anxiety really means—about your wife. I learned from K. P. Padmanabha Menon's card that she was taken to the hospital. May God bring her round soon. A good woman like her cannot be missed not merely by yourself but by the rest of our society. So I pray God that He may not be unmerciful to us." The number of visitors to the hospital showed how much she was in the minds of her friends and well-wishers and of those whom she had served and helped.

Of another incident too I am tempted to allude. That I do more to record my admiration to Mr. Madhavan Nayar, who was my friend and physician till he died.

I have been unusually lucky with my doctors. Most of them became my personal friends. Madhavan Nair was recommended to me by His Highness Appan Thampuran when I had a pain on the back of my neck which refused to yield to allopathic medicines and appliances. He belonged to Kadavallur. His learning was extraordinary; and he was a fervent devotee of Mother Goddess. He would jokingly say that, like Sankaracharya, he too had the *dvaitimsayogam*; and that he would die in his thirty-second year. That he did, to the regret of his friends and patients, and to the misfortune of the Indian system of medicine for which he was a clever and creditable exponent. Many

THE DAYS THAT WERE

me we deplored the absence of adequate encouragement to the Ayurvedic system of medicine and of the necessary facilities for its scientific development.

He had several remarkable cures to his credit. Once Dr. A. R. Menon was very ill, and Dr. A. R. Poduval, who was attending on him, himself went in his car and took Madhavan Nayar to his patient who got speedy relief from the native mode of treatment. I know of several cases, to one of which alone I shall now advert.

At an advanced period in the lives of certain ladies, a change in their system is indicated by severe headache or hæmorrhage or mental aberration or some other temporary disease. My wife had the second complaint. Drs. Verghese and Sankarambal were treating her. But when, even after a fortnight, no perceptible improvement was noticed, I asked Dr. Verghese if I could get down our native physician Mr. Madhavan Nayar. He generously agreed to my suggestion. To my wife, he came by the next train. He learned what my wife had to tell him about her health. He came out with a smile and said, "Before I attend to her, I must have my bath and coffee."; after that, he went to our compound and brought a few leaves of some herb. To a few drops he squeezed out of them, he added quarter of an ounce of cow's milk. In that liquid he mixed a pill of the size and colour of a mustard seed. "That is my injection", he said, "for a week not a drop of blood will come. In the meantime, I shall go and fetch the medicines required to give her a perfect cure." Everything took place as he said.

We have spent many hours together in talks on literary and scientific subjects. One day he talked to me with citation of several apt illustrations, on the literary beauties of *Ashtangasamgraham*. He was an ornament to the Ayurvedic profession, and, had he lived, he would have done much to popularise it.

He was an ardent admirer of my wife. He never tired of speaking of her good points as a hostess, a social worker and authoress. She would taunt him 18 times by stating that, perhaps, he might have been one of the nine gems of the court of Bhoja, to have learnt, as a courtier, the art of flattery to perfection.

To describe in detail her activities in social service, I shall not try. She has touched it in several points, worked silently till her adult years, so that it will take me long to go over them even in outline. Every movement for the welfare of those around us had our sympathy and our active support. As Mr. R. J. Dutt puts it,

"Toil, 'tis the will of Heaven,

Labour all thy mortal span;

Rest unto us is not given,

Toil and keep thy brother man".

Similarly with her conduct to our guests. She was a sedulous hostess. Our children have named one of our cottages as the Guest House. The Government also, it would seem, regard Kumaralayam as "a Show House"; for several State guests have been sent here to see the place or to see us or for both. Our house has ever been known as one where hospitality could be counted. The number of persons who have graced our house as guests or visitors is legion. Some of these have honoured us with their friendship, which we value and hold sacred. To us friendship is not "a name to lull us to sleep", or "a shadow that follows wealth or fame". It taught us to love man and all sentient beings and to intensify our love and regard to God Almighty.

The reaction has been very satisfactory. To illustrate, I shall give two or three instances. More is not necessary nor possible. Miss Olga Matiskainen, who hailed from Finland, was an officer of the

livation Army when we came to know her. We have
eral friends in that body.

I have a great admiration for this world-wide
movement. "In the slums of London, among the
omeless in Paris, and in the fetid tenements of the
back-blocks of American cities, its angels of mercy
are found." In India, it maintains many literary and
industrial schools, hospitals and leper asylums. The
army stands for salvation. It applied Love to Need,
and so its work grew from more to more, in power
and usefulness. Is life to be lost or saved? Is charac-
ter to be destroyed or redeemed? Are love and service
to waste their sweetness in a desert or are they to
furnish the motive to build a world of happiness?
These were the issues it raised and tried to answer
by its activities. It has weathered a long experience
of abuse and ridicule and has steadily grown to be
an object of admiration to the world. After the war
of 1914, America gave 13 million dollars to the army
as a testimonial for its war work.

Haste without hurry

Fight without flurry

Work without worry

That is its motto, I believe.

When Miss Olga came to us, which she did oc-
casionally, she, without any hesitation, behaved as if
she were one of our household. This is what she
once wrote to us. "You are my dearest and oldest
friends in the world! Please do not get upset for my
calling you "oldest". I do not mean your age no, no.
I am sure you understand old Nesapoo. "Old friends
are gold"; it is the old truth you, if I remember right,
taught me."

Mr. C. P. Luiz was one of my clients. I have
helped him to turn many a nasty corner. He and his
wife remembered it, and were grateful to my wife and
myself. This is what Mrs. C. P. Luiz wrote to me
after the death of her husband. She invariably came

to me, in days when any trouble brewed, for advice and words of comfort. "You are the only sincere friend of ours. A friend in need is a friend indeed. You didn't think it a disgrace to visit us or to do a honourable deed to honour my poor husband. Thus with all my heart I thank you, and promise to be ever grateful to you and yours."

"It is only in adverse circumstances we realize who our sincere friends are," So wrote to me Mrs. A. Nishimura, the talented wife of the well-known Japanese Dentist. "I find you are the one and only *genuine friend* my husband has out of the innumerable so-called friends he had when he was in Ernakulam. May God bless you and yours always."

Miss Stella Mead, the authoress, while in India, came to see us. We had long talks on various matters, social, political and literary. Even after she left India, we occasionally heard from her. "It was really a joy to have such a letter from you! I know that in you and Mrs. Menon I have two sincere friends, and the memory of my stay in your home is one of the most beautiful gifts India has given to me."

Mr. G. H. Grubb, who was the Tramway Engineer in Cochin, was the son of Sir Howard Grubb. He had taken double Honours in his University. He and Mrs. Grubb were our friends. Miss E. Turnbull, a cousin of theirs, came to see us once with Mrs. Grubb and Mrs. Luiz. She was so pleased with our house and its inmates that she ever after treated us as her friends. She is so sincere and so artless that we too in turn liked her very much. Her husband, Mr. D. M. Black, is one whom it will be a pleasure for any Indian to know. He is sure to raise an Indian's true regard for a Britain. "The word friendship to us is something more than a mere expression. When we, as I see you, do make friends, it is not an idle whim for the moment, but an enduring feeling despite the passage of time or distance. Consequently,

having heard so much from Edith about you both and having read your letters, I realised you were both dear friends to her and so to the three of us." That is from Mr. Black. The third is their charming daughter Irene. With a sentence from one of Mrs. Black's pleasing letters, I shall close this part of the sketch. "Believe me, you are not forgotten. You are very often in our thoughts. You are both very dear to me, being two of my *very few real* friends." We have been happy in the possession of good friends, and, what is more, God has also blessed us with the intelligence to sense the true from the false.

Of my wife's literary activities not much need be written. For, in spite of her fear of publicity, they have become well known. Her growing fame never affected her; she continued to be modest and sensible. Throughout her long life, she lived like a simple lady for whom the petty vanities of dress and ornaments and worldly fame had no fascination at all. She has the beauty of a quiet character that seldom speaks and never loudly.

On rare occasions, she was pressed to speak, her intense earnestness and her native eloquence made a deep impression on the audience. Her speeches were invariably short and sweet. Those before the Parishat and Nayar Maha Samajam conferences were pronounced by competent critics as models of what such utterances should be, in matter and in the manner of its presentation. Her speech before the public meeting held at Ernakulam, under the auspices of the Ladies' Association, to celebrate the Delhi Durbar Day, was a masterly one. It was published in full in the *Malayala Manorama* in its issue of 23-12-1911. The public admired it not alone for its literary beauty but also for her correct grasp of English and Indian histories which was clear from the argument in her speech. She worked at them for days, revising and refining, before she delivered them.

Here an extract from my diary will fit in well. 10-4-1937 went with wife to Pudukad Sri. Ramakrishna Asramam in the construction of which I have helped not a little Swami Agamananda. There my wife presided over the centenary celebrations and made a nice, feeling speech. On our way to the Asramam, we worshipped in the Edakunni Baghavati temple, where, we were informed, Diwan Sankara Warier devoutly worshipped and where he invariably made a garland of flowers for the deity. Memories came crowded in my mind. The ladies of the Edakunni Wariam repeatedly invited us to stay for tea and breakfast. But, as we had also to worship at Thiruvallakavu, Thayamkulangara, Oorakam and Peruvanam, they kindly allowed us to take early leave of them. We were very comfortable at the Asramam. Two Princes of the Cochin Royal Family, Sri. Chittur Kunja Namputhiripad and certain other namputhiris were there. The meeting was a crowded one. It was held in the beautiful hall of the Cherpu High School. We returned by the night train.

Once His Highness Appan Thampuran invited her to deliver an address during the Vivekodayam High School Day Celebrations. Not to embarrass her by his presence, His Highness pretended he was leaving the hall, but actually took his seat behind a screen on the platform. After the speech, he came out, explained the situation, and then expressed his pleasure in words to this effect. "I do not know which to admire most: The contents or the delivery of your address, or the courage with which you expressed your views. Well done. Very well done." Her speech was a humble but moving and vigorous tirade against the modern tendencies and alien fashions of Kerala Womanhood, and contained, towards its close, a touching appeal to them to respect their ancient and glorious ideals and traditions. Some time before this, at one of her early appearances on the public platform-

she had won her honours as an effective speaker. It was from Vaikkam where, on 3-10-1910, for the last time, the Bhasha Poshini Sabha held its annual conference under the guidance of His Highness Kerala Varma, C. S. I., F. M. U., the Valiya Koil Tampuran of Travancore, the permanent president of that Sabha. Besides the public who had gathered strong, there were present at that meeting almost all the great literary stars of Kerala. To that, at first, my wife had no invitation; then one came; and, thirdly, there was a request to speak at the conference. She made capital out of this procedure and spoke of the place of the women of Kerala in the development of Malayalam Literature. Mr. K. C. Maman Mappilay, the Secretary of the Sabha, said that he had come to the meeting with fever and a severe headache; he forgot all about his illness after the speech began, and, when it was over, he found himself free from both the troubles. Several papers had detailed reports published about the proceedings of this conference. From one of these, I have given at the close of the first appendix a few extracts that are necessary for my purpose. Here let me quote one of the many letters which we got soon after the Vaikkam function.

Mavelikara,
17-3-86.

My dear friend,

Permit me, first, to congratulate your wife upon the beautiful little essay which she read at the meeting of the Bhasha Poshini Sabha. Her style was simple and chaste; her delivery was excellent, and her words were full of wit and significance. I may boldly say that many of the male essayists failed to produce, upon the audience, that telling effect which she produced.

* * *

I hope you will not forget the Bhasha Poshini affair. The sabha must soon be placed on a sound

basis. I requested you and Parameswara Iyer to frame the necessary rules. I believe both of you will attend to it.

Yours very sincerely,
Sd. M. Udaya Varma.

But that which gave supreme joy to us was the opinion formed by the President about her performance. Every sentence of the speech was, so to say, punctuated by an acclamation of approval from the chair; and the moment, my wife sat down, His Highness got up and graciously spoke in very appreciative terms of the speech. He wound up his remarks by saying "സദ്യം അഭ്യർത്ഥനയായ് ഈ വ്യവസ്ഥാമെറ്ററി എനിക്ക് ഇത്രാളുകൾക്കു ചുറ്റാൽ കൊള്ളാമെന്നു".

പരസ്യം തപസ്സവൽ
നമോഹിത പരസ്യമനു
വിശ്വാസം മഹാനന്ദം
കല്യാണി കൃഷ്ണമനോരമ

I would like to say this much about this worthy couple. Each one is the fruit of the penance of the other. These two, Kalyani Krishna Menons give me the greatest happiness.

With the publication of her books began the arrival of requests for articles for papers and magazines from their editors. After the Vaikkam Conference, these increased to such an extent as to make it physically impossible for her to respond or to reply. Even journals published in English did not spare her. A request from Professor Sathianathan of the Presidency College she was glad to receive and to respond. "I was speaking to Mr. Ramuuni Menon in the college," he wrote to me, "about my wife's magazine which I believe you have received, and he suggested that your wife should be asked to write for the journal, and as I know you well, I write to ask you if you can kindly persuade your wife to do so. My wife will be glad to receive any article from her descriptive of

Nair Women or of the customs and manners of Malayali ladies."

Had she attempted to satisfy the desire of every editor, she would never have been able to publish her books on which one of her main claims for the gratitude of posterity rests. Even her discerning contemporaries have acclaimed them with their unmeasured praise. The Universities accepted them as texts for study. The Royal Asiatic Society admitted her as a member of that body. The Ernakulam Literary Union made that an occasion to congratulate and honour her on her merited success in the literary line. I do not think it necessary here to quote from the numerous notices about her work.

For her literary and social activities, she was presented with a medal by His Highness the abdicated Ruler, while his successor honoured her with a medal and the title of Sahitya-Sakhi. His Highness was so graciously pleased with her life, character and works as to make the presentation in person. She has ever been grateful to His Highness and his consort Lady Rama Varma for the kindness she has always received from both of them.

It should not be supposed that her life has always been one of endless joy. To me time, energy nor money was of any moment in my attempt to make her life smooth and comfortable. None the less, she had to face the inevitable shocks of a worldly existence. But it is to her credit that she took, with becoming calmness and her enduring faith in God, both sunshine and rain, joy and sorrow. The death of my brother and of her mother she felt acutely. Then came the partition in her family. It was not so much the division that affected her, but the way in which it was pioneered by her favourite sister, Srimathi Narayani Amma, whom both of us have always regarded as a dear daughter of ours.

His Highness the late Maharaja Itama Varma, the Consort of Lady Itama Varma, once advised me, incidentally, with a statesmanlike prevision, to see that a settlement was come to by which the assets stood shared among the members of my wife's family during the life-time of Srīmathi Amman Amma, my mother-in-law, who was a shrewd, capable lady. I sensed the causes which induced His Highness to give me this timely warning. But it was my rule never to talk to her on her family matters unless she volunteered to take me into her confidence on any matter on which she sought my advice or help. This practice of mine I humbly intimated to His Highness, when His Highness only remarked that he scented trouble ahead. To gratefully honour the gracious advice of His Highness, I took an early opportunity to hint this matter to my mother-in-law. She mistook my motive, although my suggestion was made the occasion for a review of the financial position of the family. I am afraid she must have found it not very satisfactory. Anyhow, I left it there.

On 31-10-1928, my wife got a registered notice preparatory to a suit for a partition in the family. From its tenor, it was clear that the two eldest males and females were left to tow for themselves while there was a combine among the rest. That was the first intimation she had of the whole affair. I told my wife never to worry over it; for, after she began to live with me, she never used to ask for or get anything from the family. Even after she became the most senior member of the family, she never interfered in the management of its affairs. So, I advised her to remain silent and to be satisfied with what she got. We requested Mr. M. Narayana Menon to appear for my wife and children in the suit, the summons for which she got almost simultaneously with the notice. Mr. M. Narayana Menon was our friend;

but he was an older and more intimate friend of Srimathi Narayani Amma and her husband, Mr. Komattil Achyuta Menon. It was to avoid every misunderstanding, incidental to a suit of this kind that I wanted him to appear for them although the case was in the Trichur District Court and he was practising at Ernakulam. He was specially told that he need not put up any fight. He was only to watch and, if possible, to safeguard their interests. Only once or twice he went to Trichur.

Immediately after we got the summons, Mr. Kudtan Menon and Srimathi Lekshnikutti Amma a brother and a sister of my wife, came to Ernakulam to seek our advice as to the course they should take in the legal proceedings. We only told them to engage some reliable valids and try to get their legitimate dues. The party feeling lashed itself so high that an otherwise sedate person once boasted in their presence, so they told me, that he could have filed a minor's suit to deprive me of the money that I had deposited in the Kurappan bank: I had a hearty laugh over it all, and enjoyed these tangible expressions of the play of passions. I can afford to; for I was absolutely innocent and never for once soiled my hands by any share in the fray. So too my wife.

Dr. A. R. Menon came to us on 6. 8. 1929, evidently as an emissary of Srimathi Narayani Amma. But he appeared before he had studied the facts of the case. For he began by saying that my wife sent a notice for partition and still was obstructing it: When he was told what the actual facts were, and was referred to our lawyer for confirmation, he was staggered. Then he toned himself down and sought my advice for an easy solution of this family tangle. I asked him if his patients were not exhibiting a sorry sight in the court; and told him that the best thing they could do was to get the matter arbitrated by Mr.

P. Damodara Menon. If the parties agreed to my proposal, I said I would persuade my friend to undertake the task. They agreed, but, in the petition prepared to be put in before the court for leave to adopt that course, they joined, without any reference to us, the name of Dr. A. R. Menon also. We never took objection to the course or to the award passed by the arbitrators, although we were told that Mr. Damodara Menon kept only a passive attitude in its framing. The only request my wife made was to be given a house, however small it may be, in Trichur. It was stoutly opposed by Srimathi Narayani Amma as all the houses there were wanted by others. Thus ended an unwanted litigation, for it could have been avoided and the partition amicably effected if only the parties had, without rushing into court, secured the services of a reliable mediator at the very start. However, remembering the words of my wise counsel of my revered mother, my wife and myself kept our heads cool, our hearts pure, and our hands clean over the whole affair. On 21-9-1929, Professor P. Sankaran Nambiar came and told me that his wife, one of my wife's sisters, "disassociated herself from many of the acts and words of Narayani Amma." Finally, on 17-6-32, Mr. M. Narayana Menon visited me to tell me that Srimathi Narayani Amma was feeling painfully my cold behaviour to her. For I avoided her after she wrote to my wife that I was acting in the case as a foe of hers, thinking that her brother and sister were putting up their contentions on my suggestion. That thought was base and baseless. She knew it; at least she could have easily known it, or, at any rate, she should have asked for my explanation before she formed that uncharitable conclusion. Mr. Narayana Menon was fully cognisant of my position, and he had no difficulty or doubt in saying that she was wrong and also it was she who had acted as an antagonist even to deprive us of our just demands and

of our appropriate share. Mr. Narayana Menon said that she was prepared to do anything to regain my affection. On the 18th of August 1932, she herself came here. When, with some show of sorrow, she broached the subject, I thought it was but fit that there should be a full and free talk. I never minced matters; I drove the facts, one by one, home. I wound it up by asking her why another name was added when it was agreed that Mr. Damodara Menon should arbitrate. "You thought you could, then, have everything in your own way, perhaps." Silence prevailed for some time which I broke by saying "we still consider you as our daughter." That was a fact, and a fact it remains.

Instead of a chapter, I shall have to write a book about her if I were to record all that I have to say of my wife; all that I ought to say for the glory of her sisters in Kerala, for the benefit of those who are prepared to take a lesson out of her life. To do that I need not have to rely on a lover's rhapsodies, but can easily fall back on the testimony of impartial witnesses. Even here I have tried to restrain my ardour and to give, more or less, an unvarnished narration of an outline of her life up to the completion of her sixtieth year. That auspicious event took place on the 10th of Vrischicam 1115, corresponding to 1939 November 26. We observed it in a fitting manner, both from spiritual and social standpoints. On a near date, her friends and well-wishers in and around Ernakulam were entertained at a Garden Party by her, while, a few dates later, her relatives and friends at Trichur were given a lunch by her. Janaky supervised the function at Ernakulam while Narayani looked after the lunch arrangements at Trichur.

The Ladies' Association unveiled her likeness in its hall and presented her with a congratulatory address. Of this Ullur wrote to me "Every word of

its contents is true to the very letter." The day after its presentation, Mr. Ambady Sankara Menon came to our house and said to her that he came to congratulate her as the recipient of that address. As a rule, he observed, addresses of this sort would contain only fulsome flattery in highflown language; but he was glad to note that this one stated facts in fair simple words. Coming as it did from such a quarter, we valued the opinion very much indeed. The address is untranslatable; the spirit of the artistic wording is such. But it is meet that I should subjoin at least an indifferent rendering of it. The original is published elsewhere.

To

Sahitya-sakhi Sreemathi T.C. Kalyani Amma Ayl.
(The congratulatory address lovingly presented
to her by the members of the Ernakulam Ladies'
Association)

Honoured Sister,

On this auspicious occasion, when you have crossed the first half of a noble life, filled with good deeds and the beauty of peace, we felicitate you, the Vice-President of our Society, with immense pleasure.

To make a tree fruitful, there will be a silent, continuous, upward flow of sap through its several capillaries; hiding behind its green foliage, a flower at dawn diffuses its fragrance; to rear up its race, a bee, without bustle and weariness, collects honey. Your unostentatious and tireless life reminds us of these.

By your lofty life you enhance the glory of your house, made famous by a long time of illustrious members. To us, your sisters and colleagues, it is a source of pride to realise that you hold a foremost position among the far-famed ladies of Kerala, by your

success for which you received, as signs of appreciation, a medal of merit from the world-famous Rajarshi and eruditescholar, the abdicated Ruler, a similar medal and the title of Sahitya-sakhi from his successor, and a ring from that monarch of the literary world of Kerala, His Highness Kerala Varma, Valiya Koil Thampuran.

The event of your starting and editing the first Ladies' Magazine, *Sarada*, in Kerala, at a time when it was considered improper for women to speak for themselves, we regard as the dawn of a golden era in the history of Kerala.

To all Indian Women you are an ideal example of the fact that selfless social service, fruitful literary efforts and happy management of a family are possible at the same time.

You have been blessed with health and prosperity, with a noble lineage and fame, with a long and happy married life and good progeny; you have purified your self by good deeds and a God-fearing life. We pray that the latter half also of your dedicated life may be blessed with peace and opportunities to serve your fellow-beings, and that we may have your valuable leadership for a long time yet to come.

With this prayer we offer you this address of congratulation.

Members of the
Ernakulam Ladies' Association.

To conclude, it can be truly said of her that she has met each successive demand as daughter, sister, wife and mother with calmness and resolve, binding body and the daily incidents to her high will, with her life chastened and her faith strengthened in the progress from youth to a venerable and respected old age.

XIX. MY DAYS WITH MYSELF.

"The thought of the past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction." Wordsworth.

"O wad some pow'r the gittie gie us
To see ourselves as others see us." Burns

What will others say? What *can* they say?

Except superficial remarks based on hearsay evidence, will they deliver an unbiased judgment on a consideration of every relevant fact and circumstance? An Angel may, but a man can never, and it is no fault of man. And if all are angels, where is the place for gossip and scandal, which to some furnish the spice for daily talk.

So, the best thing for me is to go on in my own way. My race is nearly run, and I have no need to conceal any fact. I do not want any one to think of me otherwise than as I am. Those who like me may keep to me; the rest can leave me alone.

My childhood was happy. While living in the family residence for the first time, I had, as a school-boy, to face a few starved and wintry days. Barring these, I have glad memories of sunny days and peaceful nights. Home life was rich in warm domestic affection centred in the mother to whom I was devoted. My mother never took up the attitude of a pedant nor adopted the methods of a preacher. Her unspoken word, example and the unobtrusive words were of vital importance in my development, mental, moral, even physical. My memory lingers with pleasure on the scenes and names of my early days.

My life as a student also was all along happy in every way. My stay with my brother in his Lily Lodge at Trichur I can never forget. It was so delightful and profitable to me. I can never tear away from the recollections of the Lily Lodge. That place

like KumaraIayam holds a spell over me. My studies were congenial and stimulating; and my masters were, most of them, men of high principles and learning. Of real friends, I cannot, I fear, count many, though there may be several who touch my trail intimately. I always bade an early farewell to 'flattery's fawning face', to 'grandeur with his proud grimace', and to 'frozen hearts and hasty feet'. Intimacies of a few friends have survived and constitute a perpetual endowment; while of some friends I have to lament like Mr. R. C. Dutt

"Where be comrades of my youth!
Friends professing love and truth,
Love that linketh heart to heart,
Faith that lives till life depart.
Vanished forms of air, alas!
Shivered like a globe of glass."

I have been a hero-worshipper from the beginning. I began with the worship of my mother. That, perhaps, supplied the impulse to worship my elders, without any studied effort, and to venerate

"the man whose heart is warm
Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and
whose life coincident."

This habit explains in a way my passion for biography. But I never took men at their face value. There was a coolness in the scrutiny which my professional work only encouraged me.

My profession, after I took it up, I came to like immensely. With its immense opportunities, its inestimable prizes, "its fine gymnastics in combined common-sense, accurate expression and strong thought", legal profession provides a welcome field for any honest, industrious person in which to work. It is an honourable calling, where you come across a loyal fraternity among your colleagues. It also brings us into contact with illustrations of selfish strife and

the depravity of the human mind. But lawyers have to insulate their minds against these inclinations and, with sleepless vigilance and polite firmness, to try, within their limits, to protect the rights and privileges of the meanest as of the highest citizen. To this end, they will have to be equipped and to keep the sinews of their mind in perfect trim. Otherwise, they will be open to the just criticism that a lawyer's ambition is only to make and, if possible, to save money.

From the moment I accepted a vakalat, his interests and mine became identical. I threw myself unreservedly into his case. Many a day have I come back home from the court house after the trial of a complicated case with my temples throbbing, dissatisfied with my effort and alive to the good and effective performance of my antagonist. The verdict I left in the hands of God; and a bath and worship in the temple, the reading of a few verses of the Gætha and some lines of Tennyson calmed my nerves and gave me the needed rest. But, even in my busiest days, I never gave myself up entirely to law. It was impossible for me to do so. I had to devote a good part of my time to literature, social work and for the welfare of my motherland.

I have always tried to do my duty according to the high traditions of my profession. I tried to be incorruptible in my practical reverence to them. But it is not my idia to deny that I have not tried to make and to save money. Personally, I was rich in having only few wants. My truest friends have been my books. To buy books, now and again, was the only luxury to which I was addicted. My wife and myself never hesitated to help persons and institutions that claimed our sympathy and support. I also cared to husband my resources to provide for the comforts of my wife and children.

Ours was not a rich home, not one of artistic make. It was, however, one of genial, genuine, shared happiness and contentment. Pleasant and religious was the atmosphere and peaceful the surrounding conditions. I liked to have cleanliness everywhere; otherwise, my mind refused to function. That aspect my wife and servants never forgot. My wife took to her duties, social and domestic, with simple, unaffected dignity. There was no domestic tyrant. The young were allowed to be young and make music. The servants had an amount of freedom and confidence which they liked and appreciated.

At one time, I feared that I shall be reduced to financial difficulties; that the cost of living would have to be curtailed; and that the doles of charity, and donations to students and institutions would have to be stopped. I thought I would reel under the blow when four banks, in which I had invested part of my hard-earned savings, stopped payments. But I soon recovered my balance and prepared myself to face the situation. Like thousands who had suffered, I thought I too would remain in a quiescent mood. But that was not to be. People from far and near came to me, some with tears in their eyes, for help and guidance. So, in connection with the Travancore National and Quilon Bank, the crash of which made a wider repercussion than the other three, I arranged a meeting of the sufferers to be held in the St. Albert's High School Hall on 18-7-1938. The local Agent of the Bank was kept informed of my movements. At the meeting, I was requested to file a petition in the Anjikkulam District Court to forthwith start liquidation proceedings. We all felt relieved with the appointment of Messrs. Varma and Varma as liquidators. For the very sympathetic consideration extended to the victims and the firm stand he took to give speedy relief to them, I have, on their

behalf and mine, to convey this expression of our gratitude to Mr. P. V. Jeyappan, the Judge. When, after his transfer, I found that the recommendations of the Committee, appointed by the court to assist and supervise the work of the liquidators, were not being given due consideration by the authorities concerned, I tendered my resignation of my place on that committee. The committee and the liquidators wanted me to reconsider my decision. But I could not.

New Road, Cochin,
10th September 1941.

T. K. Krishna Menon, Esq.,
Kumaralayam, Arcakulam.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of resignation, dated 1st August 1941; was duly placed before a meeting of the Committee held on 12th September 1941. After consideration, it was decided to accept your resignation, and we were authorised to convey to you the following resolution.

"While regretting his decision to resign from the Committee, the Committee extends its gratitude and appreciation for the valuable help rendered by Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon in the conduct of affairs of the Committee and for his active interest in the affairs of the bank in liquidation."

The liquidators endorse the above opinion of the Committee.

Yours faithfully,
(Travancore National & Quilon Bank Ltd.)
Sd. Kerala Varma
(For self and co-official liquidator)

Before I left the Committee, I had the comfort to see that all in the State were given at the rate of 14 annas per rupee. But for extraneous circumstances, they would have got their whole amounts.

The other three Banks, Calicut, Keralavilasam and Metropolitan did hit me hard, particularly the second

one. I am not one of those who affected or could afford to despise wealth and identified poverty with virtue, even though I was ready to admit that man lived not by bread alone, and that he could, even when poor, make life sublime by devotion to high aims and ideals.

My married life has been perfectly happy. I do not mean to suggest that it has been a perpetual honey moon; but I can honestly say that no discordant note spoiled its uniform happy harmony. It has been my good fortune that the care of my mother, my unusual shyness and my fastidious nature have prevented me from going astray. Till 25 I was oblivious of the feelings of sex-love; and, after sixty, I have deliberately controlled them and practically lived the life of a *Brahmachari*. (That is the Aryan ideal; and both my wife and myself appreciate the wisdom of the ancient seers. Our relationship of unsullied beauty, passed by unperceptible degrees from the antiphony of passionate hearts to a deep and deliberate bliss; durable from the daily dust of life.

I have a conservative cast of mind. My intellectual liberalism is an acquired habit; and it has never obliterated my love of sleepy hollows, and of my tendency to depend on "the grass-grown turnpikes" of my innate conservatism. I find that, in many cases, I like renovation but not innovation; evolution but not revolution. I desired to have continuity with the past, and to protect whatever of the old foundations that were sound. I consider it no disgrace to turn my mind to the certainties of the past, when the future is uncertain, and to find comfort in what is beyond the peril of change. My creed was and is "to combine a firm grip on the past with a quick sense of the present and a bold outlook on the future."

In one respect my wife disappointed me. I love music. Lord Asquith is one of my heroes; but I do

at subscribe to his remark which compared "the performances of musicians as a compound of noise and disance, only tolerable if not too loud." I know nothing of the science and art of music. But I love devotional songs. When sung by good musicians, they give me the thrill of unspeakable pleasure. Music is primarily intended as an aid to devotion; and the *Raga-pana* is meant only to get at the correct tune of the hymn proposed to be sung. But, now-a-days, strange to say, some experts give importance to acrobatic performances and relegate *kirtanams* to a second place! And, even when they sing these, they do so without feeling and without understanding the import of the words to which they do not give out audible expression.

My wife had studied the dance and music of *akattikkalippattu* while very young. When I found her disinclined to develop her vocal music, I got down a *veena* through my friend Mr. T. G. Ramier, late of the Mysore Civil Service. On that instrument too she did not practice earnestly or long. My daughter too showed no taste for music. But I am glad to note that Parvathi, her daughter, is learning it. Her son, Narayanan, also has a relish for it, and owns a good voice and a timbre of exquisite cadence. Krishnan, her eldest boy, is a stranger to either. But these three and Gopan, Gopan's son, make music in the house by their very presence, and occasional prattle. We discuss on every topic under heaven. Gopan would be a mute witness of our debates; but, if he is in one of his bad moods, he will butt in and put an end to our talks. They make me feel young and happy. And, because in their company, I can, at odd moments, clap on the fool's cap, I get snatches of relief from hard work and boredom. That I can faintly help them to tread their way properly in their life and studies is an additional source of joy to me.

My term of six years as the Secretary of the Cochin Legislative Council was a partial diversion

from law to politics. In politics, I took Morley and Gokhale as my models, while I followed Telang and Isaac Oate, in law. I realised in good time that, in politics, nothing could be gained by obstinacy. That something could be had by conciliatory measures. Lord Morley has written, I believe in his "Recollections."

"I have sat five and twenty years in the House of Commons. From personal experience, therefore, I have no good reason to worship its wisdom and its virtue."

My period in the Council was shorter; but it was enough to land me on a similar conclusion about it. I was there struck by the appalling waste of time and money which it occasioned. "The waste of time," says Morley, "Where so much of it goes to what has the singular peculiarity of being neither business nor rest, (but one continuous flow of long, fruitless talks) to one whose years had been industrious and practical, was not far short of heart-breaking." How true! First rate politicians will never go about placating mobs; and mobs, as a rule, never elect first rate men. It is said that crowds would follow men with the longest pouch and the loudest bray. Then, where is your vaunted democracy? How do you expect to reap its rich harvest? As it is, elected bodies get the narrow, uninformed patriotism.

"Without the means of knowing right from wrong,
They always are decisive clear and strong;
When others toil with philosophic force,
Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course,
Flings at your head conviction in the lump
And gain remote conclusions at a jump."

That is the sort of patriotism we have now on parade. An overdose of words is no good drug. Behind them, there must be the deeper spirit of the nation, the abiding desire for its future welfare. Above all, the

erge of self-sacrifice should be present not as an incidental impulse, but as a habitual mood.

Self-Sacrifice! Will it stand before the communal problem, to which our politics have now been wedded? Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan truly said "My analysis of the problem is that it is a question of loaves and fishes - of the shares in the administrative spheres. It is not a religious problem at all. Were it so, there would be constant feuds and bloodshed in the villages. But here the people are at peace. The trouble emanates when we come to the intelligentsia—the people who are out to exploit the position for getting power." If we want progress, we must see that our State rests upon the broad and deep foundations of a union that will not, cannot be obliterated by caste or creed. No national progress is possible.

"Till each man find his own in all men's good
And all men work in noble brotherhood."

That is, much the same thing as saying that national progress is not possible unless you spiritualise politics. Lord Morley has lamented the decay of reverence in modern democracy. Lord Bryce also has expressed a similar anxiety. Democracy is doomed to decay so long as it is dictated by numbers. For,

"What are mere numbers? They are merely
nonsense.

Wisdom is never found save with the few.

Votes should always be weighed, not merely
counted

Sooner or later must the State go under
Where numbers rule and ignorance determines."

Further, a vote should be regarded as a privilege for proved civic capacity. To attain this consummation, the villagers must be made to realise their responsibility.

This brings me to a very important subject to which I am in duty bound to advert. For the future of this motherland of mine, certain steps have to be

taken. Our Rulers come to the throne only after they become old and naturally incapable of taking any active interest in the practical administration of the country. The Diwans are generally foreigners. Thus, to give efficiency and continuity in the administration, there must be an Executive Council of three, inclusive of the Diwan. Mysore was so governed for several years. It made rapid strides under that system. Or, to keep in line with the times, there may be a Cabinet of three Ministers; one from the Lower, another from the upper House, while the third, the Prime Minister, should be a man of administrative experience, of sterling character, and of living patriotism. Secondly, there must be a Princes' Chamber, consisting of seven eleven or fifteen members, beginning from the First Prince, to which the Ruler can turn for advice and consultation. The members will thus be in touch with the affairs of the State which they will get an opportunity to study in all their aspects. Thirdly, each village must be considered a primary unit of administration. It is there that the people should learn to administer their affairs to their benefit and to the best advantage of the country. If every village is made good, happy and contented from an economic, social, political and literary point of view, general administration will automatically become easy and healthy. People will then realise their civic responsibility return the best men to the Council, and will never clamour for communal claims to the prejudice of efficiency which should be the rock-bottom of every administration. That is my considered conviction.

Along with these above, there are two problems which have to be sympathetically approached and effectively solved by the combined work of the Government and the public: I refer to the elevation of the depressed classes and the satisfactory adjustment of the claims of capital and labour. The solution of these

two major problems is a political necessity, indispensable for the peaceful and prosperous life of the country.

The backward classes form the fabric of society; I have a reverence for them as they matter most in the world; and we know ruin is most fatal when, in society as in architecture, it begins from the bottom. That their condition should in every way be improved is an imperative demand of the best interests of the country.

Equally peremptory is the need to set at rest the conflict between labour and capital. It is not my purpose to discuss the relative merits of the rival claims of the two parties. One point I make myself bold to state: that the primary needs of the workers should be the first charge on industry. That proposition will, I trust, find acceptance everywhere. It is to the benefit of either party and to the advantage of the State to find out an appropriate method for settling disputes so as to avoid disastrous conflicts and devastating consequences. I would go further and plead for a policy that will harmonise conflicting interests, and thus lay a stable foundation for every industry to thrive and for the promotion of social harmony and general happiness.

I considered it a sacred duty to help the cause of the backward and of the toiler. In this *samsara*, the journey from birth to death, the quest for truth and the zest to serve form the divine reality.

"Life is mostly froth and bubble,
Two things stand like stars:
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own."

For my service to the two classes of people, I was misunderstood, sneered at, even scandalised. I never cared for those who so treated me; for justice, I felt, was on my side. I continued to offer my services to those who suffered. My time and tongue, my pen and money were ever at their disposal.

THE DAYS THAT WERE

"Haste not! rest not! calmly wait,
Meekly bear the storms of fate,
Duty be thy polar guide; —
Do the right, whate'er bidel
Haste not! rest not conflict past
God shall crown thy work at last."

That was the principle which guided my work. My mother blessed me for my service; those for whom I worked showed their gratitude in no doubtful terms; and I lived to see the day when those who scoffed at me turned round to commend me and to serve the cause I held dear.

This duty never interfered with my professional work or literary activities; or, for the matter of that, my ordinary daily routine; for I so fitted it in, so that that too formed part of the usual programme.

As far as practicable, I tried to utilise every fleeting moment in doing some useful work. I loved my friends who, like myself, engaged themselves in some profitable work. With them I have been free and communicative, and lived in perfect, peaceful confidence. But from idlers and my foes I kept away. Not that I hated them. Why should I hate them? I have always been tolerant. "Pardon all things in others, but nothing in yourself," said Pythagoras. It has been my rule to do justice to those with whom even on vital matters I could not bring myself to agree.

"There is much bad in the best of us
And so much good in the worst of us
That it ill behoves any of us
To talk about the rest of us."

But I found mine to be a good wearing creed for those who love quiet and peace and wish to save time. This saves us from that boneless quality of talk, all form and no content. Moreover, I had no stock of vapid remarks and not developed that splendid meaningless smile. I have been by some considered defective in

that wholesome quality of a capacity for laughter. I now, however, that I have sense of humour and enjoy joke. No one will say I am wanting in a talent for silence, though many may not admire my ability to devote myself steadily to a mute journey through the different courses of a dinner.

Books have been my constant and helpful companions. It is only with an effort that I can get along with me not well known to me. "I am not quite at home in the conventional social functions by which life's troubles are tempered to most of us . . . My withdrawn nature and social timidity have given me a reputation that I am difficult to know. I am said to be even cold, while I know I am capable of strong and profound emotions. I am nervously organized, sensitive, and high strung." How completely these words of Sir Radhakrishnan accord with my nature.

But for my somewhat morose and taciturn nature and my strict systematic habits, I would never have been able to turn out the work I have done. Of this the previous pages speak. A repetition here will serve no purpose whatever. But of my systematic habits, a word would be timely. Somehow, I have gained a notoriety for owning them. Dr. Lekshmanaswami Mudaliar wrote to me, in 1942, while I was in Ooty, "I am sure you will be able to enjoy your rest there with profitable work, as I know what a disciplined life you have lead in the past." Professor Sankaran Nambiyar thus referred to this my character in an autograph album of my granddaughter.
 One point I am prepared to admit. My system has enabled me to span diverse activities, in the face of indifferent health which shadowed me all my days. But it is one that any one can adopt with ease and comfort.

I get up, as a rule, precisely at 4 A. M. When I have heavy work, I rise earlier. For, normally, I am

satisfied with six hours of sleep. I pray and sit to work. If I have no cases to attend to, I devote some time to any book or paper on hand, or I read some book. Over a good book I simply gloat on. I feel charmed by it. It imparts to me instruction, as also a sense of its calm. I would soon be absorbed clean out of myself while reading it; and the echo of its words will haunt my ears like the sounds of a lovely rill. All intelligent readers must have realised that certain books stand out of the ordinary mass. These are the classics upon which time has set its seal. They carry with them something of the eternity which lives in every human soul.

Exercise, bath and prayers will take me to 8-15 A. M. which will find me in my office-room. There too, till 10, I work at my cases, or, in their absence, I read or write. 11 to 4 and 5 I had to be in court. After my return, I have my exercise, bath, and worship in the temple. At 8-30 P. M. or 9, I have my supper, soon after which I retire to bed. Such are the timings of a normal working day. In between, I find time to read religious works with my wife and also to talk to her. On days I need not go to court, I take an hour's rest after breakfast before I start reading or writing. Reading filled a large part of my life. Next to it came writing.

I do not use tea, coffee, tobacco or stimulants of any sort. I never felt restless for the lack of the weed. I never chew or use snuff. But I do not look askance on those who enjoy them. I am content with one full meal a day; for the rest, I am satisfied with milk, the juice of lime, orange or dried grapes. I like fruits, so much so that I cannot be without them. This abstemious life has, I believe, kept me in vigour and health till 72, after which, as my horoscope was silent, it had to be cast afresh for a further period. That is why I finally decided to write up the sketch to my seventy-second year.

My original idea was to stop it at 60. According to the Hindus, that is an auspicious year in a man's life when he crosses the half span of human life. Not that I found anything more in 60 than in 59 to make me spend money in that year, particularly, on religious ceremonies and social festivities. However, to respect custom, I resolved to get all the ceremonies performed in the course of the year, and to crown them by giving a good feed to the poor. My nephew did not fully fall into line with my view. So I had to accept his suggestion. He expressed himself in these words: "All those who have had the privilege of knowing you know well enough that your record of 60 years has by no means been a barren one, but that there has been plenty of material in it to be legitimately proud of. They say it is the effort that matters and not the result—and all those acquainted with your work will concede that they are not inconsiderable—and, for sustained and conscientious effort in noble causes, it will be hard for anyone to beat you. . . . The occasion is one for just rejoicing for all concerned, and it is one of the most auspicious occasions for a happy gathering of relations and friends. I am sure you won't deny us the pleasure and privilege of partaking in the celebration of such a happy event." However, I tried to keep the event private. None the less, by the day on which I completed my sixtieth year, it came known to a circle of my well-wishers who were in and near Ernakulam. "Mother sends you a small purse", wrote Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon, son of Lady Rama Varma, "which she asks me to beg of you to accept." A cool and collected person like Mr. T. M. Krishna Menon, who never bursts into flowery phrases on any occasion, and whose approbation and regard were never lightly given, wrote to me these words, which I valued much. "I congratulate you on your *shashitipoorthi* and do so most heartily, since the life you have hitherto spent has been throughout one of public service rendered

disinterestedly." In course of time, several letters of felicitations came. My friend Vidwan Kuruppan tried to work at a commemorative volume. But I requested him, seriously pressed him to drop that project. But to one more letter, dated 23-4-1105 M. E., I must advert for a reason that will be clear from its close. "It is indeed highly gratifying that at an age which is considered difficult of attainment among us, you are still in possession of full vigour, both of body and mind, and all the buoyancy of youth. To speak of your good luck will be doing you a grave injustice, because I know that this, like all your other attainments is only the result of your conscious, careful and constant exercise of the difficult art of plain living and high thinking. I have, however, always felt, with a touch of grievance, that you have been born in the wrong place and that, consequently, the world has not been able to get out of you even a fraction of what might have been got under more favourable auspices; but, considering the particularly chilling atmosphere in which you have been forced to thrive, it is perhaps a matter for rejoicing that you have been able to do what you have done. It speaks volumes for your strength of will and tenacity of purpose."

"Felicitation, however, is not the sole object of my letter. I consider that it behoves on every one who has led a life of varied activities and introspection like you to give to his fellow-beings the benefit of his experiences. I believe we have passed the time when an autobiography would have been considered to be an obtrusion of the Ego and, as such, calling for an apology and explanation for its *raison d'être*. The world is full of precedents and no one can be more aware of them than your own studious self. So, I suggest it as a fitting moment of the happy occasion that you should begin to write your Recollections forthwith." This is from my friend Mr. Pattathil Padmanabha Menon, a brother of the late Judge Narayana Menon.

Others also urged me to do it; friends like Messrs. Sankaran Nambiyar, Ullur and K. P. S. Menon. But the deciding factor that started me on the course was graceful coercion of Lady Rama Varma.

It was not an easy job for me. It was uphill work. To me, doubtless, the abiding things lay in the past, and ancient happenings were clear. But I had to read over my diaries, which I began to write from my fourteenth year, take notes and analyse them. Similarly with letters and numberless other records. Then I had to choose the line in which the life is to be written. Somehow, I have obeyed the behest of my friends. Will it satisfy them?

I am not vain to suppose that this autobiography will create history and will be read by posterity. But I loved the writing of it.

An autobiography can at best be only the repetition of the first person singular. But I looked at it from another point of view. How good is man's life? I mean the mere living if it is done decently. We leave traces behind our passage through life, and these may at times be helpful to those coming after us. All along, that was the idea that I had behind my mind when I wrote this, an artless attempt to state briefly a few facts of my uneventful life. There is no sermonising here. I am not competent to take up that note.

My great mentor Morley comes to my aid here with a few apt, quotable words. "Much of my ground involves others; deeply should I regret if a single page were found unfair, or likely to wound just sensibilities. More deeply still should I deplore it, if a single page, or phrase or passing word of mine were either to dim the lamp of loyalty to Reason, or to dishearten earnest and persistent zeal for wise politics in younger readers with their lives before them".

I have not posed for posterity, nor intended this work to capture the applause of the public. I am not so foolish as to suppose that that fickle Dame, Fame, will blow my name through the corridors of Time. It is fruitless to care for self after the body is reduced to ashes in one's patrimony of a pit of six feet! But if any unlucky reader will stumble on this volume, let me give him this note of warning. He may at times feel confused for want of sequence in the narration. To the main story subsidiary subjects may get in, without any introduction, to speak for themselves. Now and again, he might detect other mistakes too for which I ask of him his forgiveness in advance.

It is not my purpose to persuade anybody to my way of thinking, nor am I troubled on finding that my views are at variance with those of the majority. I think I am free to respect my conscience and to have confidence in it. There is no need for a spineless abrogation of my judgment. If faults I have committed, I am ready to own them. Hypocrisy, according to some, is the tribute that vice has to pay to virtue. I hate to think so. I have had my own ideals of honesty. Implaceable truth it may be difficult to follow. But it is exciting, precious enough to make it worth while to risk even a tumble. For Goodness, Beauty and Truth are the foundations upon which both man and the Universe are built. I had not to quit my faults in despair; nor they remained unamended through any indifference of mine. A work like this has to bear snail of intimacy and frankness. But I must confess that I have considered it prudent to place certain limits to the intimacy that I wish my reader to enter upon with me.

I have practically rounded my life's work. I have no vulgar appetite for hollow applause. But if it is found that I have not been rotting like a weed, but ha-

"Sown some generous seed
Fruitful of further thought and deed.",

it would be something that would entitle me to get a reference, however distant, in the history of my country and its literature.

What is beyond? It is profitless to reply. The subject of religion is more of the heart than of the head. That is perhaps, why Faraday said that he kept science and faith apart. Even a great, modern scientist, like Sir James Jeans says "There is a growing conviction that the ultimate realities of the Universe are at present quite beyond the reach of science and may be and probably are for ever beyond the comprehension of the human mind." The miracle of the universe and its mystery too the most powerful telescope touches but the fringe of its immensity.

What is beyond? In the words of the great and noble Pasteur, "Beyond is infinite space, time and grandeur. None can comprehend these words. Blessed is he who carries within himself a God, an ideal, and who obeys it — therein lies the spring of great thoughts and great actions. These reflect the light from the Infinite." These words find an echo in my heart. I believe in the system of Advaita of my great countryman Sri Sankara. I believe in the existence of God, call Him by whatever name you please — God, Paramatma or Parabrahma. God has the power to project Himself into appropriate manifestations, if and when it becomes necessary to do so. Innumerable seers have recorded this fact. If it were not their honest conviction, they would never have said so. They seek nothing, they gain nothing by uttering an untruth. Many of them are Atmanishvas who have also seen some of the personal manifestations of the Almighty.

As I glance back, I can remember days that came to me freighted with great significance. Great friendships, vital contacts with certain master-minds that opened to me new spheres of thought and feeling. These are of help to all who are faithful to the higher call. Even when the magic of the living voice of a *sidha* or a saint is absent to influence one's thought and character, works like the *vedas*, *upanishads* and *puranas* have become the silent monitors of awakened minds. To me the *Bhagavat Gita* has been a cherished companion. On me it has wrought lasting effect through its living pages.

Let us approach religion through another avenue. As Lord Morley remarks, "Religion has many dialects, many diverse complexions, but it has one true voice, the voice of human pity, of mercy, and of patient justice."

We are all set together in the world for a little time, like travellers in a wayside water-shed. To an agnostic, what lies behind and beyond this life, is only a field for guess or hope. He may know nothing. But, to all, one thing is certain; for they can see that daily with their eyes. Many of our fellow beings are shadowed with sorrow and strained with want. It is open to us to help or hinder them or to stand aside as mute witnesses of the tragedy. If we are tempted to help them, as every religion prompts us to do, there are many ways of doing it. Whatever way you elect, act with all you heart. "Follow the star that leads you: follow it without turning, whatever the toil, whatever the pain. After it; follow it; follow the gleam."

The Hindu religion is eloquent on this theme. A small well-known verse states:— what does Vyasa say in all his eighteen *puranas*? Only this: Doing harm to another is a vice; doing good a virtue.

To me, religion has been the stay of my life. My faith I at first imbued from my mother who used to spend a good part of the day in prayer. Whether the skies were dark or bright, it gave me the power to go on with incessant labours. I have given myself up entirely into the hands of God to be used in whatever manner He thinks it best.

POSTSCRIPT

(T. Madhava Menon)

My uncle, Krishna Menon is very anxious to have a short note on the reign of H. H. Ravi Varma Maharaja. He had a sincere respect for him, while H. H. placed implicit confidence on my uncle. In a sketch published in the Modern Review, my uncle has remarked about H. H. that he had the faith of Dharmika Chakravathy, the generous, patriotic impulses of his eldest brother, and the tactful firmness of the abdicated Ruler. The people of Cochin have ever to remember with grateful reverence the zeal with which he laboured for the welfare of the State, the warmth with which he welcomed helpful suggestions, and the lofty disdain with which he regarded carping criticism. He was well fitted with the character and capacity of most of the high officers of the State. He was never tired of remarking that he wished to have officers of character more than of capacity, those endowed with patriotism enough to think of a conscientious performance of duty, not equated to pay, promotion and prospects.

H. H. was fortunate in having had for his Diwan Sir George Boag, a brilliant officer who had left his mark in his University and in the varied departments he served under the British Government. Sir Boag and

my uncle became friends very soon, and remained so ever afterwards.

H. H. completed his 80th year on 29-4-1121 (14-12-1945). It was a unique event, as no ruler, according to recorded history, had attained this age before. So, Krishna Menon wanted to celebrate this event in a fitting manner. His friend, Mr. Marayil Nana Menon, the Municipal Chairman of Ernakulam, readily agreed with my uncle's suggestion. The Hon. Minister Mr. Louappan and Mr. Nana Menon convened a public meeting on 28th Thulam 1121, at which representatives from several parts of the State were present. It was then resolved to present an address to H. H. On being written to for leave to present the address, H. H.'s reply was that he had objections to any wasted expenditure in these difficult days, besides other objections on other grounds also. In this predicament my uncle had to go and induce H. H. to graciously consent to his subjects' show of their appreciation of his rule. It was due to my uncle's prayer that certain literary men were awarded titles and medals on that occasion, and a decent sum was endowed for the publication of unpublished, valuable Sanskrit works.

The address was presented on 19-12-1945, on which occasion the titles were conferred and the endowment was announced.

Both H. H. and the Gov. consulted my uncle about the constitution of the committee for the publication of Sanskrit works. After persistent persuasion by my uncle, H. H. Rama Varma Parikshit Thampuram (the present Maharaja) graciously consented to be the president of the committee. In his diary, my uncle has stated how the revered Sanskrit Scholar, Sahridayathikan Rama Pisharody wrote to him expressing his appreciation and gratitude for all the work my uncle had done in this respect.

Among the recipients of titles were Mr. P. Gopalan

Nair, the well known commentator of Srimad Bhagavatam, the late Bhakta Siromany Vazhakkunnath Vasudevan Nambuthiri, Mr. Vadakkankur Raja Raja Varma Raja and Dr. L. A. Ravi Varma. This fact made my uncle most happy. He was also gratified over the title of Rao Sahib which Mr. Marayil Nannu Menon got through the intercession of H. H.

H. H. insisted that my uncle should go and see H. H. at least twice a month and even ordered that a car should always be sent to fetch him to the Hill Palace and back. H. H.'s sons, the Sarvathikariakar and the palace controller always consulted uncle on tough matters, being instructed to do so by H. H.

H. H.'s Consort, Srimathy Parakkat Kamakshi Amma, a sister of Mr. P. Damodara Menon was trained in the old traditions of aristocratic womanhood. She told my uncle's wife on one occasion that H. H. had asked his sons to always consult my uncle on difficult matters, to be always on the safe side.

My uncle was nominated as a member of the following committees: (1) The Education Code Revision Committee; (2) The committee to report on the working of the Staff Selection Board; (3) The Village Development and Improvement Committee; and (4) The Devaswom Advisory Board.

H. H. Kerala Varma, the present Elaya Raja of Cochin was the chairman of the last mentioned committee. They made very timely and useful suggestions to the Government regarding the Temples and the use of the Devaswom funds.

The work of the Village reconstruction committee was most congenial to my uncle. He always remarked that the villages should be self-centred republics and that on the prosperity and contentment of the villages depended the glory and welfare of the State. He was glad, therefore, that, in spite of several hurdles in its

way, the committee was able to submit a unanimous report with practical, and not costly suggestions which will conduce to the maximum benefit of the villages.

His work on the second committee was somewhat of a delicate nature; but he never flinched from it even for a moment. His note to the report was acclaimed as a bold and timely one, and called forth several letters of praise even from distant villages and persons quite unknown to him.

He had hard work on the Education Committee for nearly eight months. His patience and perseverance were always praised by all his colleagues in the committee. His supplementary note is considered by competent critics as equally valuable as the main Report itself.

Soon after, he had a nervous break-down as the result of the extraction of his teeth. He was confined to bed for about four months. Since then he did not recover his normal health. What work and worry my aunt had in those days, only those in touch with her could know. On the Vishuday of 1120 my uncle remarked thus about her: "What work my dear wife is daily doing without any murmur and in perfect good humour! May God bless her; for she is a treasure." The Princes, the Diwan, and several people from far and near came to see him during his illness.

While lying ill he was requested by the Secretary of the All Indian History Congress Committee to contribute a chapter on Kerala to the then projected History of India. With the help of Mr. V. K. R. Menon, M. A. Msc., he prepared and sent it.

He never missed an opportunity to do any bit of social service. The Pallathamkulangara Cheruvaram dispute which actually led to a civil suit was amicably settled by his arbitration.

The Shanmukhapuram Vals Colony worked for a

long time under his guidance. The small shrine he started there for the worship of Sree Subrahmanya is still flourishing and is made good use of by the colonists.

He sympathised with the Kudumi people who lay scattered about the State without any organisation or leader, and put them on the road they should take in their progress in life.

My uncle was on excellent terms with the journalists here. He occasionally treated them to tea and often talked to them of their supreme duty.

The gentlemen who came from Coimbatore for the celebration of the Perumal Day at Thiruvanchikulangara received active help from my uncle in their work.

He was made the first Honorary (combined) member of the Rama Varma Research and Archaeological Society, and was offered, for the third time, the Presidentship of the Malayalam Improvement Committee.

Before closing this postscript, I would like to say a few words about his literary works. The works that he forced others to write or to translate are legions. Lalithopaharam, Pratimanatakam, Malathi-Madhavar Mahaviracharitham, Bhimeeparinayam, Kadambari Saaram, Sankaracharitham, Suka-Kokila Sandesam, History of Kerala's Sanskrit Literature, Folksongs, Ancient Scripts, Sakthi Thampuran and others are but a few of them. The mere listing of them will take us far, and so I shall not attempt it. I shall just refer to some of his works not touched by him in his memoir. He and aunt together compiled the Gita Mahatmyam which he presented to Vallathole on his 10th birthday. The great poet applauded the work in very laudatory terms. The Books for Malabar Bairns, the Malayalam Science, An Introduction to Village Agriculture, Cochin Princes, The Chronicles of Temples, What Hinduism, The Hymns that have helped Kerala,

... of Malayalam Literature. An Introduction to
Bhasha Kavyam etc. have all been published with a
noble purpose.

There was an attempt to shift the capital of the
Perumals from Kerala to Karur. In a masterly reply he
proved the hollowness of the interested contentions of
the Tannilian protagonists.

His outstanding contribution is the work on "Dra-
vidian Culture and Its Diffusion." There he has tried
to glean all he could gather of the history and culture
of the Dravidas, the Nagas, and the Nayars, to show
that that culture spread itself almost all over the world
through the Port of Musiris. It is only after he got
the inspiration of two well-known European Scholars
on the subject that he ventured to publish his paper.
The Hon. A. C. Schooner as well as Prof. J. O. Schrae-
der wrote very highly about the work and pressed him
to publish it as quickly as possible. Indian scholars like
Mr. K. P. S. Menon also wrote, praising the work and
appreciating the researches of my uncle. What Mr.
K. P. S. Menon wrote was, "This little book has
opened a whole new world to me."

It now remains to me only to refer to a pleasing
aspect of his life, the close friendly bond that exists
between his family and the household of Advocate Mr.
M. Narayana Menon. The sacred link that binds
them is the abiding devotion of the two friends to God,
and their intense love in the offering of *namam* to
mantirajapam.

Ernakulam, }
15-7-'24. }

